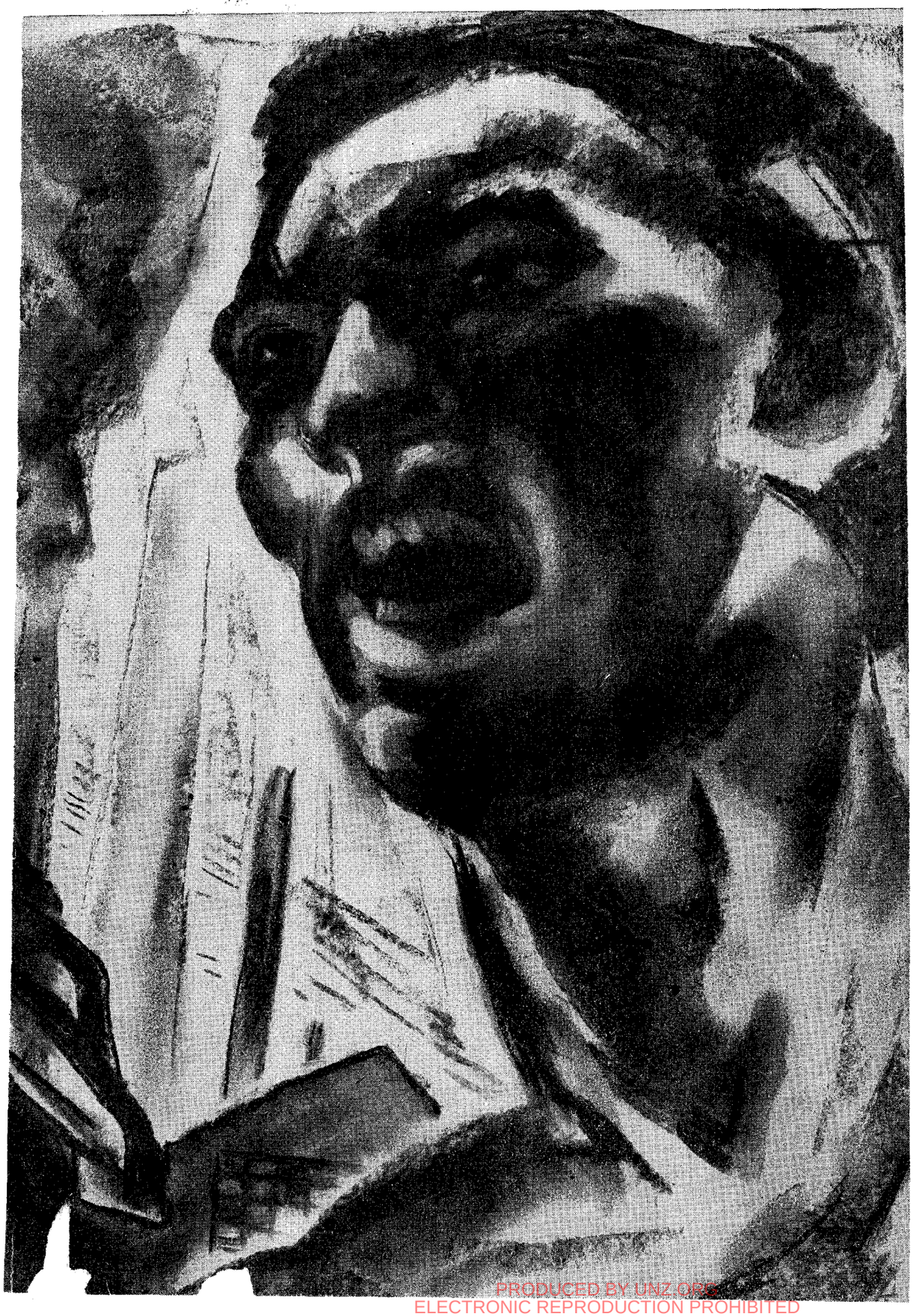
THE AUTO UNION SHIFTS INTO HIGH *Carl Haessler*

NEW MASSES

JANUARY 19, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY



Outlook for 1937
R. Palme Dutt

The New Congress
M. R. Bendiner

Topics of the Times
Robert Forsythe

Cuba's Dictator
Juan Marinello

Welcome to Miami
W. C. Kelly

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

UNDERSIZED, rodent-faced, flap-eared Reichsminister of Propaganda Herr Professor Goebbels may have heard this story before; if he has, the pleasure is ours, because he then had it from sources so official as to make it impossible for him to dismiss it as a Red Jewish lie. We had it from someone who was on the spot when it happened, and it happened simultaneously (or at least as simultaneously as the flicker of a radio wave permits) in London and New York. From the British headquarters of the Columbia Broadcasting System the other day came the proposition to New York: Adolf Hitler is willing to give Columbia a half-hour broadcast to the American people. Free, naturally. Folks in the program department on the New York end must have fluttered as they took the proposal up to a Big Executive. The latter, however, took it in his stride, as such folk are supposed to do, and indeed with some sort of special sense not usually credited to his tribe. Yes, he was ready for Columbia to broadcast the Hitler speech. "Tell London," he said, filing his nails, "that we will take it on an exchange basis. We will take Hitler for a half-hour, and we will send Berlin for the same period Rabbi Stephen S. Wise." Nice fella.

Furrowing the seas as we write is the *Aquitania,* bearing New Yorkward Anna Louise Strong, author of *I Change Worlds* and member of the staff of the English-language Moscow *Daily News.* The North Atlantic's antics this week have worried us no little; the ship will be a day late at least, and Miss Strong is scheduled to write an article for our Special Spanish Issue out

next week. By radio, however, she assures us that she will deliver the piece within twelve hours after landing. She comes from Spain, where she has interviewed leaders of the International Brigade and poked her nose into the many nooks and crannies that a good journalist would seek out. We don't know yet what she'll write about for our special issue next week, but we do know that it will be of her standard—which is all we need to say.

We are adding an extra eight pages next week—making forty—to accommodate the contents of this special issue on Spain. On January 18 the fascist rising will be six months old. In the great smithy of the civil war many new achievements of the Spanish people have been hammered out. Great political, social, and economic changes have taken place, at a tempo never equaled in time of peace. These changes, plus their military, international, and cultural accompaniments, will be treated at length in this special issue. Among the contributors to it will be, besides Miss Strong, Ralph Bates, novelist, author of the current *The Olive Field,* just returned from Spain; Paul Nizan, foreign editor of the Paris *L'Humanité;* James Hawthorne, our Madrid correspondent; Cuban writer Pablo de la Torriente-Brau, NEW MASSES correspondent recently killed in action fighting in the government ranks; Theodore Draper, our foreign editor; a group of Spanish Popular Front poets; Abraham Fishbein, attorney and authority on "neutrality" laws; and others.

Who's Who

M. R. BENDINER is political and economic editor of the NEW MASSES. He leaves for Washington this week to look over the situation at close range. His findings will be published in early issues of this magazine.

Carl Haessler is Chicago manager of labor's news syndicate, Federated Press. He has contributed to our pages frequently in the past.

R. Palme Dutt is an internationally known Marxist political economist, and author of *Fascism and Social Revolution,* the current *World Politics, 1918-1936,* and other works. This article by him is published simultaneously in the *Labour Monthly* in England.

W. C. Kelly has contributed before to the NEW MASSES. His most recent publication in our columns was "Landon Comes Out for Rain."

Sarah N. Cleghorn is an old contributor who has long been known as a staunch ally of the working-class movement. She recently published her autobiography, *Three Score.*

Owen Burke is dance reviewer of the NEW MASSES.

Juan Marinello is one of the best-known Cuban poets and novelists. He is now in exile, a refugee from the terror of the Batista regime, which could not silence his attacks. He will be present at the congress of Mexican writers and artists which convenes in Mexico City January 17. Editor Joseph Freeman will represent the NEW MASSES at that congress.

Nathan Frankel is an attorney practising in New York.

Milton Howard is a Marxist scholar, formerly on the staff of the *Daily Worker,* who has frequently contributed to Review and Comment.

F. W. Dupee was formerly editor of *Miscellany,* a literary and critical bi-monthly. He is pinch-hitting as literary editor of the NEW MASSES for Isidor Schneider, who has taken a leave of absence to study on a Guggenheim fellowship in the Soviet Union.

Walt Carmon has been a frequent contributor to, and was formerly managing editor of this magazine.

Robert Gessner is author of the current *Some of My Best Friends Are Jews* and is a student of Jewish history and folklore. For this reason he was asked to be guest drama reviewer in covering Werfel's *The Eternal Road.*

Rockwell Kent's drawing on page 23 is from the Heritage Press edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.*

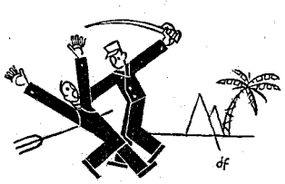
Muriel Rukeyser, to whom John Malcolm Brinnin inscribes his poem, is herself a frequent contributor of verse to our pages.

What's What

THE attention of NEW MASSES artists and others is called to an announcement of a poster contest under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, the non-political group which constantly campaigns for defense of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, press, and belief. According to the Civil Liberties Union's announcement, the contest is being held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the drafting of the United States constitution. Designs for the posters to be submitted, the announcement states, should illustrate the constitution's bill of rights, contained in the first ten amendments. The Union will reproduce the prize-winning posters for use throughout the country in forums, schools, meetings, etc. There will be a first prize of $50, and two prizes of $25 each. The judges are John Sloan, Peggy Bacon, Arthur Frank, Rollin Kirby, and Walter Pach. All designs must be submitted on or before February 15 to Mrs. Parkhurst Whitney, director of the contest, at 23 East 16th Street, New York City.

Flashbacks

THE Spanish People's Front, which reactionaries met first with dumb anger, then with dum-dum bullets, rounds out its first year this week. On January 16, 1936, only one month before receiving a majority at the polls, six minority parties met, signed a working agreement to coöperate in the interests of the people. . . . While Yankee, Canadian, British warships and marines hovered around reassuringly, Salvador's President Martinez directed the slaughter of hundreds of agricultural



workers and peasants on January 20, 1932. Under Communist leadership, the growers of the country's coffee had risen in revolt, taken important centers. . . . A tapped telephone wire, a shirt monogrammed "K. L." helped German officers seize and identify Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, January 15, 1919. On that day, these two—Germany's leading revolutionaries and opponents of war—were lynched. . . . A few hours later (January 16, 1919) American Reaction bundled forty-six war-resisting Wobblies off to prison. Throughout their trial in Sacramento, all but three of them maintained an absolute and disdainful silence.

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NEW MASSES
JANUARY 19, 1937

William Sanderson

Problems Before Congress

The presence of Fighting Franklin in the camp of the budget equilibrists gives special emphasis to the need for pressure on federal legislators

By M. R. Bendiner

"OF COURSE," said Franklin D. Roosevelt, wagging his great head from side to side, "of course, we will continue to seek to improve working conditions for the workers of America — to reduce hours over-long, to increase wages that spell starvation, to end the labor of children, to wipe out sweatshops. Of course we will continue every effort to end monopoly in business, to support collective bargaining, to stop unfair competition, to abolish dishonorable trade practices. For all these we have only just begun to fight. . . . "

All that was last October, before a wildly cheering audience that packed New York's Madison Square Garden. It was not altogether specific, but it was forceful. It was the note the American people wanted to hear, and, outside of Maine and Vermont, they flocked to the polls a week later to renew the Roosevelt lease on the White House.

Since that militant evening in the Garden some of his more enthusiastic admirers have come to believe that what the President meant was that he had just begun to fight and wasn't quite familiar with the game. Certainly he has been pulling his punches ever since. In the week following November 3 there were half a dozen assurances from high administration figures that the President meant big business no harm. Then from the fighter himself came a promise to balance the budget, which, coupled with subsequent assurances that he would ask Congress for no new taxes, could mean only one thing—relief cuts.

Soon statements from Cabinet members began to trickle out confirming the trend toward economy at the expense of the jobless. Farley handed out the opinion that "relief would be decentralized, the W.P.A. wound up, and the burden shifted to local communities," and Ickes informed the press that the administration intended "to retrench all along the line." This was soon followed up by the announcement of W.P.A. plans to separate 425,000 workers from their meager relief jobs, and just one month after the election some 200,000 were dropped. By this time it had begun to appear that Fighting Frank had rushed the enemy's corner, liked the scenery, and decided to settle down.

The beginnings of a momentous strike wave and admitted pressure from some of his labor support forced Roosevelt back into the center of the ring. The result was a presidential statement to the press favoring federal action to eliminate child labor, long working hours, and starvation wages. Whatever pleasure progressives might have derived from this vague but hopeful move was unfortunately more than offset on the very same day by the President's shrill demand for a wholly one-sided embargo against the friendly, democratic government of Spain.

With Roosevelt still whirling about like a weathervane, the Seventy-fifth Congress has come into existence. Ostensibly it is to be a Congress ready to jump at the President's bidding. Only sixteen of the Senate's ninety-six members are Republican. Seventy-six are Democrats, two are Farmer-Laborites, one a Progressive, and one an Independent. In the House the Republicans are swamped 332 to 89, with an additional and highly important "third-party" bloc of 13. Never has a president had such overwhelming party support in Congress, never a grander opportunity to steer a Congress along a path chosen by himself.

With some such thought prevailing, the country waited impatiently for Roosevelt's message to the new Congress. Those who looked for a fighting demand for a real program of social progress must have felt a bit foolish when it was all over. If this is what Roosevelt means by fight—an altogether likely hypothesis—it is to the Capitol, not to the White House, that we will have to look for pugnacity.

There was less fire in the message than in any of Roosevelt's previous speeches to Congress, and, except for two important instances, it was practically devoid of specific recommendations. Where the President was specific,

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moreover, he was far from progressive. With the world gasping at the brazen effrontery with which Italy and Germany have been waging a revolution for a minority of Spanish fascists, Roosevelt worked himself into a lather over an insignificant American shipment of used airplanes and parts to the legal government of Spain.

On the burning question of a constitutional amendment to enable the federal government to regulate wages, hours, and working conditions and to guarantee true collective bargaining, Roosevelt was likewise specific. He is against it. This was perhaps the most shocking section in his message. Knowing as he did how the Supreme Court had wrecked the New Deal and prevented even its minimum curbs on industrial anarchy, he chose to avoid the constitutional problem and to place his trust in the Court. All that was needed, he appeared to feel, was a gentle rebuke to the high bench, a reminder that the constitution was "intended to receive liberal and not narrow interpretation." If the Court chooses to wreck Mr. Roosevelt's second administration, he will certainly have himself to thank, since a constitutional change would no longer be unpalatable even to such conservative Democrats as Senator Robinson of Arkansas, majority leader and administration spokesman.

Housing and farm tenancy, Roosevelt admitted, are problems "for which democracy must find solutions." The social-security law must be broadened, speculation curbed, price levels protected from violent fluctuation. It is impossible to obtain curbs by state action alone. "The statute of N.R.A. has been outlawed," he pointed out, "but the problems have not." All very true, all very obvious. The President certainly recognizes problems when he sees them. But what is to follow? Roosevelt didn't say. No doubt specific recommendations will be submitted from time to time on some of these questions, but it grows more obvious daily that pressure from the left must be forthcoming on every one of these items—and on many that Roosevelt failed even to mention—if anything like the most advanced legislation is to be obtained.

In the following paragraphs I shall attempt to outline the major legislative possibilities before Congress, indicating in each case, as far as possible, the general position of the country's most progressive forces. In a number of instances it will doubtless be necessary to fight for the best legislation introduced, or likely to be introduced, on a given question, even though it falls far short of what the situation demands. Communists, at least, will fight for the most advanced bills possible, rather than play into the hands of the reactionaries by combining with them to block such legislation on the ground of inadequacy.

Scott Johnston

Relief: Approximately $1,000,000,000 is needed to maintain relief until June 30 even at present standards. The Workers' Alliance, marching on Washington this week to demand expansion and higher standards, asks $1,250,000,000. The United States Conference of Mayors, reportedly with the support of Harry Hopkins, wants $877,500,000. President Roosevelt first stated his intention to ask for only $500,000,000. Counting what is still left from the last appropriation, this would mean a reduction in relief outlay of approximately 33⅓ percent. In his budget message, however, the President raised his bid to $650,000,000, or just about half of what the Alliance demands. Nevertheless, reactionaries in Congress have already announced hostility to Roosevelt's proposal as needlessly high. The appropriation voted should serve as an excellent index to the true complexion of the Congress, and for this reason the strength and impressiveness of the January 9 demonstrations and the march on Congress by the Workers' Alliance January 15 are of the utmost importance. Relief appropriations for the next fiscal year are not likely to come up before March, at which time it is possible that a bill will be proposed to consolidate all relief functions under a new federal Department of Public Welfare.

Neutrality: Exploiting the deep and widespread anti-war feeling in the country, the administration has already driven through Congress, in shameless haste, an emergency law prohibiting the shipment of arms to Spain. There was no possibility that such meager shipments as were contemplated would involve the United States in a war at this stage of European affairs, and the move can hardly be interpreted as other than an unfriendly act against a fellow-democracy. Since Germany and Italy are waging an undeclared war against the legal government of Spain, employing tanks, complete battalions, air fleets, ships, and munitions for the purpose, it is reasonable to demand at least that the arms embargo against Spain be countered by a similar embargo against the two fascist states.

The entire neutrality question will come to the fore again, in any event, since the present law expires May 1. Discussion then will probably center about the question of giving the president discretionary powers in declaring embargoes, or leaving the law mandatory against all belligerents as at present. Since the aggressor is usually the stronger power, mandatory embargoes on both belligerents tend to reward aggression. For this reason progressives should favor discretionary legislation. To bar the misapplication of such discretion, the Communist Party asks for an embargo against nations engaged in war contrary to the provisions of the Kellogg Pact, thus assuring justice to a nation that is the victim of aggression.

Labor: Imminence of a strike wave of precedented proportions is certain to give lab legislation the center of the Congressional stage for the greater part of the session. In general two types of legislation will be offered: piecemeal measures, designed to check abuses in specific industries or sectors of industry, and broad attempts to replace the outlawed N.R.A. In the first category are the so-called "little N.R.A.'s" such as the revised Guffey coal stabilization bill and the Ellenbogen bill for the textile industry. Both of these measures have full union support, as has the Crosser six-hour-day bill for the railroad industry. An extension is likely to be called for in the Walsh-Healey law, which demands N.R.A. labor standards on work contracted for by the federal government. At present the act is almost meaningless, since it includes only contracts exceeding $10,000 and covers no construction contract, regardless of cost. According to Secretary of Labor Perkins, less than three percent of federal awards are affected by the law. Should the Wagner Labor Relations Act be upheld by the Supreme Court, progressive Congressmen should be urged to amend it by specifically making company unions illegal.

In the field of broader labor legislation the proposal of Senator O'Mahoney (D., Wyo.) holds the spotlight. The O'Mahoney bill, first introduced in 1935, would require all persons and corporations doing an interstate business to obtain a license from the Federal Trade Commission. These licenses might be withheld or revoked for violation of a specified list of conditions, including a ban on child labor, non-discrimination between the sexes in rates of pay, guarantees of collective-bargaining rights, compliance with all the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, maintenance of fair trade practices, and establishment of rates of pay and working hours only on the basis of collective bargaining.

Like the O'Mahoney bill, the Connery thirty-hour-week bill would require licenses for shipment of goods in interstate commerce. In addition to demanding a thirty-hour week as a condition, the Connery measure also calls for "a just and reasonable weekly wage sufficient to permit workers to maintain standards of living, decency, and comfort." This is much too vague, and would require an amendment such as that suggested by the Communist Party, guaranteeing pay at trade-union rates and an adequate minimum annual wage.

Both the Connery and the O'Mahoney bills run a grave risk of invalidation at the hands of the Supreme Court—and that is the real labor issue of the session. Some assurance must be obtained that when Congress attempts to carry out a people's mandate its efforts will not be tossed out of the window. What specific proposals along this line will be made it is impossible to say at present, but the unfortunately defeated Representative Marcantonio left behind him a farmers' and workers' rights amendment which might well serve as a model. Unequivocally it would give Congress the right to fix minimum-wage and maximum-

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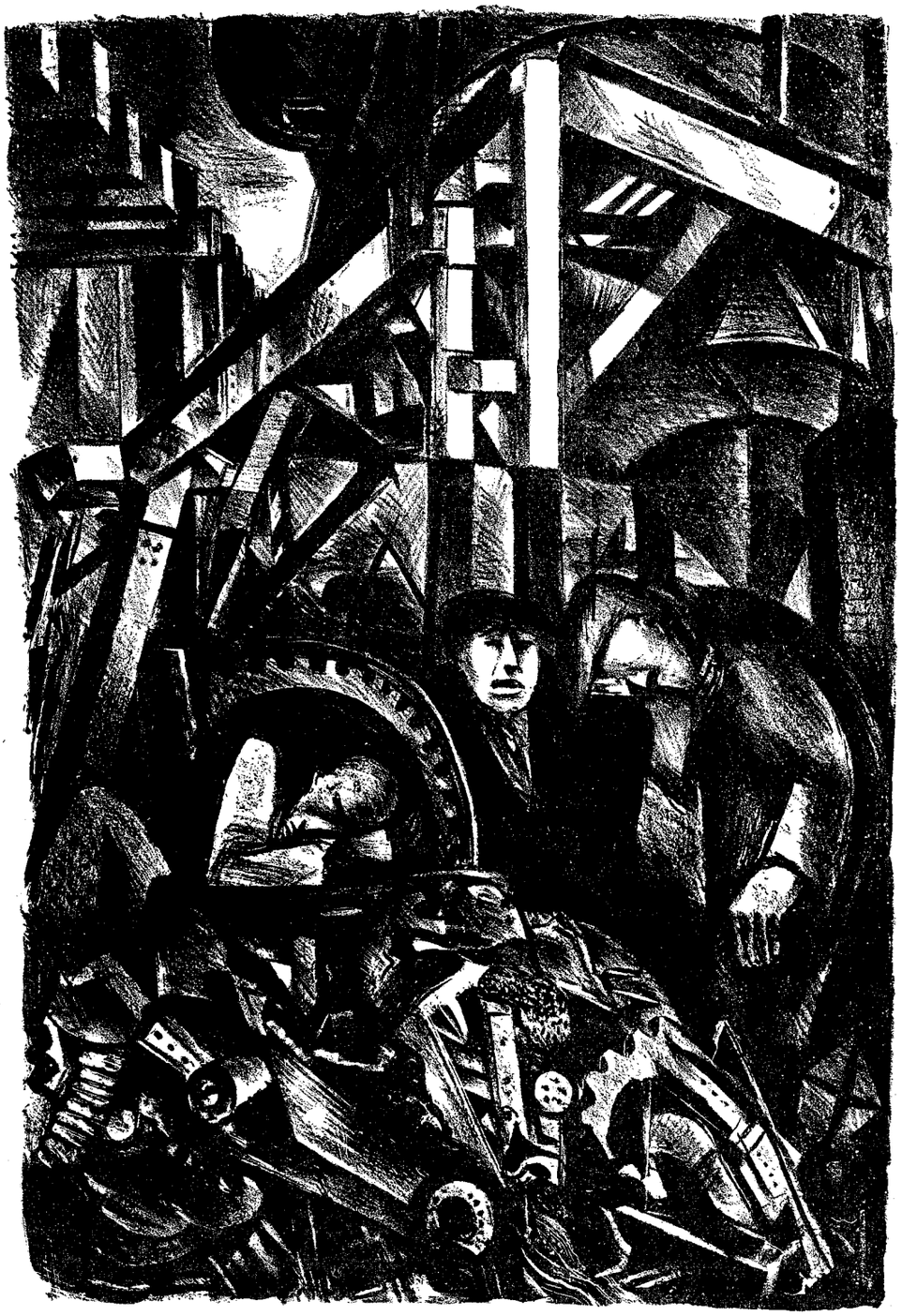

Scrap Heap Lithograph by J. Vogel

hour limits, to provide full social security, to prohibit child labor, and generally to provide "for the social and economic welfare of the workers, farmers, and the consumers" of the nation. Against such an amendment President Roosevelt has "just begun to fight."

Agriculture: The Congressional outlook for farmers is dark, to say the least. They are less vocal than their industrial brothers, and the administration has not been impressed with their desperate plight. There is accordingly little prospect of anything like adequate legislation. Strong demands are needed to get action ending evictions and foreclosures, establishing a long-term moratorium on farmers' debts, and assuring sufficient relief for those stricken by drought, thousands of whom have been dropped from W.P.A. relief rolls. Secretary Wallace appears to be veering strongly in the direction of more rigid crop control, fearful that good weather will produce a surplus.

In the present session the farm question is likely to center around the pitifully inadequate Bankhead-Jones farm-tenancy bill. Between 1880 and 1935 the percentage of the country's farms operated by tenants increased from 25.6 to 42.1. The Bankhead bill at best would care for only half of the 200,790 once-independent farmers reduced to tenancy within the past five years, leaving something like 90 percent of the total number unaffected. Even so, it will find stiff opposition from those who believe, or pretend to believe, that high prices, secured through crop reduction, is the one road to farm prosperity. Like the somewhat similar Tugwell farm-tenancy bill, the Bankhead measure would make its beneficiaries subservient to the agricultural policies of the government, substituting federal peonage for landlord peonage. Crop-insurance proposals should be watched for provisions throwing the cost on the farmers, to the profit of private insurance corporations.

Social Security: The American Association for Social Security regards amendments to the Social Security Act as "foremost among the problems confronting the Seventy-fifth Congress." As it stands, the association finds that the act "not only fails to achieve the aim of establishing protection against the hazards of modern industrial life, but, through its unsound method of taxation, may aggravate existing insecurity." Substitution of "progressive taxation" for much of the burden now borne by employer-employee contributions is recommended, along with far more liberal annuities. These changes, carried several degrees further, are embodied in the Frazier-Lundeen Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance bill, which Lundeen, now a senator, plans to reintroduce. The Lundeen bill would put the entire cost on "accumulated wealth," through taxes on incomes, corporate surpluses, and the like. It would provide adequate compensation for all persons unemployed, and, to those past 60, old-age pensions equal to the pensioner's average earnings—in no case less than $15 a week. While battling for the Lundeen bill, progressives would be well advised to support such liberalizing amendments to the present law as are proposed.

Outside of these categories there will be a number of important measures before Congress, of which space limitations prevent detailed discussion. Outstanding are the Wagner-Costigan anti-lynching bill, the Wagner-Ellenbogen low-cost housing and slum-clearance program, the more liberal Scott housing bill, renewal of the State Department's authority to conclude reciprocal trade agreements with other countries, maintenance of the National Youth Administration, the Nye-Kvale bill to end military control of the C.C.C., the dangerous "M-day" plans providing for drastic dictatorship in wartime, and the Nye bill to make mandatory a national referendum before Congress can commit the country to war.

Many more proposals that will bound and rebound from the Congressional springboard are still in too nebulous a stage to talk about. Others that are now undreamed of will spring up by the dozen. It is these that will require constant vigilance. Anti-fascists must not forget how the notorious Tydings-McCormack "incitement to disaffection" bill was sneaked through the Senate of the Seventy-fourth Congress when the liberals had their backs turned. Twenty-five similar bills against "subversive" activities were introduced in that same session. No doubt they will be introduced again.

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The Auto Union Shifts into High

And that anti-knock, high-test fuel, the C.I.O., lends its strength in bucking G.M.

By Carl Haessler

BEHIND the tear-gassing of sit-down strikers, mobilization of the National Guard, formation of the "spontaneous" vigilante Flint Alliance, the provocative acts of the company guards, the arrogant statement that General Motors itself is standing pat, is, in fact, staging a sit-down of its own—behind all these none-too-novel trimmings of the present contest between an industrial giant and its workers, the tycoons of General Motors, as they sit in their council chambers and plan their campaign, wear a worried frown.

The revolution in the morale of the automobile worker is what's worrying the General Motors moguls and the du Pont-Liberty League higher strategy above them. Only 135 men were organized last July; today thousands more are signing up. The men have a growing union, now over 100,000 strong, with a common-sense, buoyant young leader in Homer Martin, former athlete, preacher, and auto worker. Martin smiled as he told the delegates: "I'm not the big shot. There aren't any big shots down here. We just work together and we take the best advice we can get. And we don't know where we can get better than from John L. Lewis."

So ardent is the new union militancy that union officials find one of their main problems is to keep it within disciplined, coördinated bounds. But when a premature sit-down takes place there is no scolding or outlawing in the old craft manner. Plans are shifted a bit and experienced union organizers take charge, under the veteran eye of the C.I.O. high command.

"The C.I.O., whose agent I am," declared Director John Brophy to the auto union conference, "are united in this undertaking to organize the workers in the mass-production industries and particularly the workers in the automobile industry. In their behalf I pledge to you the assurance that the C.I.O. group of unions are back of you in this undertaking to win for yourselves the solid fruits of collective action. This can come only through bona-fide collective bargaining, and I am sure that you, my fellow workers, are willing to take up that task and be satisfied with nothing else."

An old-timer at Fisher Body, trouble-shooter for the die department and delegate from Flint Local 156 to the conference January 3 that authorized a strike call, summed up union-making history in the industry like this: "Long ago I belonged to the International Association of Machinists as a tool and die maker. There was a general union during the war, but it soon died. But the machinists

Arthur Getz

weren't much interested in us in the auto plants, and when the N.R.A. started up I joined the Mechanics' Educational Society of America. But that, too, was mainly for the skilled men and it had plenty of trouble, and when I got into the Fisher Body here I see that everybody's joining the United Auto Workers, and so I do, too. And it's a good job, believe me."

The union held its first convention as an autonomous international of the A.F. of L. at South Bend, Ind., last April where William Green presented the charter. In July the union affiliated with the C.I.O., and some months later the A.F. of L. executive council whined that "this action was taken by the officers of the United Automobile Workers' International Union, notwithstanding the devoted service and assistance given this organization by the A.F. of L." However, the new union had little chance of sound growth under the hobbling leadership of the A.F. of L. until the C.I.O. took hold.

THE HEART of the C.I.O. is the United Mine Workers headed by John L. Lewis. Coal—steel—autos is the chain that interests the coal miners in the auto workers, with collateral links in glass, oil, metal mining, textiles, and rubber. There is genuine community of interest among union workers in all these industries. Their unions are all in the C.I.O. Coal contracts expire March 31. Steel and rubber workers are feverishly organizing. Textiles are astir. Glass furnaces are cold. And automobile production for the new season has still to pass the half-way mark.

Chrysler executives have been shrewd enough to be somewhat decent in union dealings. Ford's bullet-lined empire is hardest to crack. So General Motors is the logical union target. Instead of following either the Chrysler or the Ford policy, Executive Vice-President Walter Knudsen of General Motors has wobbled. He has bought tear gas, but hasn't used it in the sit-downs. Perhaps he feared the gas might indirectly damage the machinery. He has hired hundreds of spies—one of them a union higher-up unmasked by the LaFollette Senate civil liberties committee—but hasn't tried wholesale firing of union men. Just a man here and there, a transfer, or a layoff, or a Black Legion flogging or bump-off. He has the reactionary advice of the Liberty League lawyers that the Wagner act providing for collective bargaining is unconstitutional, but he hasn't refused to bargain. He merely refuses to bargain at headquarters with the union's international officials, and he tells the union to bargain with the plant managers. He probably remembers how Ford sales suffered when Henry had his anti-semitic brainstorm in the early twenties, and he doesn't want a labor boycott now, with Plymouth and Ford reaping the benefits. He gets an injunction from a Republican judge, but fails to press the Democratic sheriff to enforce it.

General Motors feels itself vulnerable while its workers feel their growing strength. So it is likely that the corporation will attempt some sort of compromise instead of inviting a showdown and a finish fight. Had Landon been elected and had a Republican governor remained in the Michigan state house and had the A.F. of L. Executive Council succeeded in strangling the C.I.O., General Motors might feel more confident. It has been caught off its guard by the sit-down and stay-in technique of labor and hasn't worked out a sound defense. Maybe next year, but hardly this.

WRITERS on the auto situation make a point of the European origin of the sit-down technique, citing the French strikes of last spring. But the beginnings go farther back than that. Before the war the French railroad workers and English garment workers had perfected the ca' canny technique of staying on the job and working, but studiously obeying every rule in the regulations. The result was practically equivalent to a sit-down and often brought results. Then a few years ago coal diggers in a British-owned mine in Hungary stayed down without food in protest at starvation wages. "We might as well starve here as above ground," was the message they sent up. Last spring the men in the Nine-Mile Point mine in South Wales stayed down over a week, but got food regularly. Soon after at Blantyre in Scotland the men stayed down

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nine days and the bosses refused to let food go in. Later at the Bedwas Colliery in South Wales, the men stayed down three days to protest company unionism. This ended in a compromise, the company allowing the men to belong to the bona-fide union and the men foregoing the lightning strikes they had used as a weapon.

In all probability the American press has been a leading factor in popularizing the sit-down in America. As soon as one breaks out, editors rush feature writers and cameramen to the scene. There are vivid page-one stories and loads of pictures. The radio adds its powerful bit. The community turns out to see the strikers fed through factory windows by wives and mothers. The kids are held up for daddy to kiss while the newsreels click and the sound-men are at work. Preachers talk about it in their churches. Motorists slow down as they pass the plant. And in a couple of months it's become an old American custom. But pressure from du Pont's General Motors and elsewhere is bringing a change. Shrewd news photographers at the Flint sit-down predict that many of their snaps will not be used. General Motors' Flint *Journal* privately says it's playing down pix and news. Soon the radio will be muffled and the preachers gagged.

Too late, however. The damage has been done, the new technique learned. It's more fun to strike indoors. It's easier to hold off the scabs. It's safer fighting state police and company gunmen behind the factory walls. It's a cinch keeping out raw materials. And the machinery is an expensive hostage in case of dirty work by the boss.

ON THE top committee of the C.I.O. sits Heywood Broun, president of the American Newspaper Guild, though the union itself will not take action on affiliation until its convention in St. Louis early in June. Newspaper Guild cards held by reporters and photographers act as open sesames in strikes and labor actions of C.I.O. unions. A fraternity of interest is growing up between the white-collars of the typewriter and the mass-production workers. During the United Auto Workers meeting in Flint, while reporters waited outside for the press conference to follow, half the talk in the pressroom was about the guild. Correspondents from reactionary papers explained that they would like to join, but . . . Or they said they were waiting for a big rush of joiners so the boss couldn't penalize them. Guild members gave them encouragement and then turned to the intimate union problems that arise in dickering with the publisher. Do high minimum scales bring down the top salaries closer to the lower limit? Is the closed shop really a good idea? Should the guild turn the heat on a "good" publisher?

Inevitably the guild is building important strategic pillboxes for its members on the general employer-worker front led by the C.I.O. of which the automobile sector is now nearest zero hour.

The issue was summed up in Chairman Lewis's message from the C.I.O. to the Flint conference: "Huge corporations, such as United States Steel and General Motors, have a moral and public responsibility. They have neither the moral nor the legal right to rule as autocrats over their hundreds of thousands of employees. They have no right to transgress the law which gives to the workers the right of self-organization and collective bargaining. They have no right, in a political democracy, to withhold the rights of a free people."

For Muriel Rukeyser

Touch! See, against spotlighted wall,
Crisis sweating in his mask,
Her dagger deftly home and
Wagging at his ear.

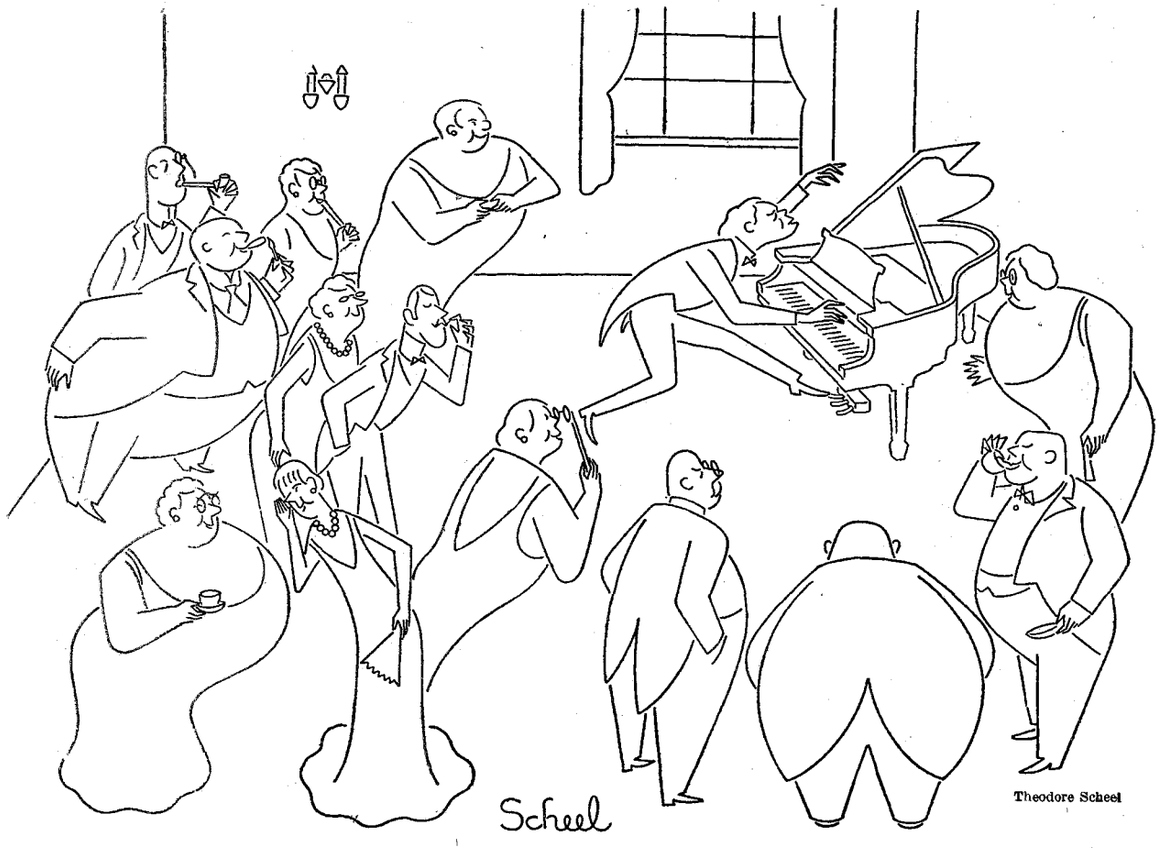
Transcontinent, transwilderness,
And now
The first bright wing across:
Poet in helmet, horizon-eyed.

This woman knows our land,
Lands nameless as future;
Inhabits a hangar of plans
Keen for departure.

Joan of revolution's arc,
Luminous and winged, armed
With the glorious word,
The April heart.

JOHN MALCOLM BRINNIN.

★



"This makes our protest against sit-down strikes unanimous."

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BRITAIN'S BALANCE OF POWER

Maurice Becker

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Covering the events of the week ending January 11

CYNICAL Senator Ashurst (D., Ariz.) listened to President Roosevelt's two messages to Congress and commented: "Congress will have the courage of the President's convictions." If he is correct, there will be only a modicum of courage required, for the opening message was one of the palest of the Roosevelt state papers (see page 3). Vapory for most of its length, the speech got down to brass tacks only twice, and in both instances it faced squarely to the right. The first of these was a request for "an addition to the existing Neutrality Act to cover specific points raised by the unfortunate civil strife in Spain." Apart from the message, the President was less ambiguous on these "specific points." He demanded, and got, an embargo on all shipments of arms to Spain, with the immediate aim of blocking the consignment of $2,770,000 worth of airplanes and parts from Robert Cuse, of Jersey City, to the Madrid government. In effect the new law placed the fascist-hired Franco junta on an equal plane with the lawful and recognized Spanish government.

The second specific recommendation in the President's message was on the touchy subject of the Supreme Court. Despite all that the Court has done to wreck his New Deal, and despite the widespread demand for a constitutional change to curb the power of the Court, Roosevelt found that "the vital need is not an alteration in our fundamental law." What is needed, he said, is "an increasingly enlightened view with reference to it." This remark and a few other gentle chidings were taken in some quarters as a bold stand against the Court, but even his own supporters treated the President's declaration as a retreat. His statement, wrote the strongly pro-Roosevelt Arthur Krock in the New York *Times,* "echoes . . . in far less belligerent language, recent words of members of the Court itself."

Taken as a whole, the message was cited for praise in the most conservative papers of the country. "Admirable in general tone and temper," said the tory New York *Herald Tribune,* "its quality deserves high praise and its effect cannot fail to be reassuring." And even Hearst found it "a heartening avowal of the basic American principles."

ROOSEVELT'S budget message, two days later, did nothing whatever to raise his stock in progressive circles. On the contrary, it chalked up two more victories for reaction. With the Workers' Alliance calling for a deficiency relief appropriation of $1,250,000,000, and with the United States Conference of Mayors asking $877,500,000, Roosevelt asked Congress for only $650,000,000. Even this amount, which clearly pointed to another sweeping layoff of W.P.A. workers, was $150,000,000 more than Roosevelt originally intended to request. At the same time, the military appropriation asked by the President set a new peace-time high, totaling $980,763,000.

Although President Roosevelt's "neutrality" blow at Spanish democracy was rushed through Congress at breakneck speed, there were many indications that Senator Ashurst was much too hasty in predicting a subservient Congress. First and most important of these indications was the formation of an organized and independent progressive bloc in the House of Representatives. The group, which will insist on its own representation in major legislative committees, named Representative Boileau (P., Wis.), as its floor leader.

Rather than give any impression of countering an anti-war move, the progressives regrettably joined in with the others to make the ban on arms to Spain all but unanimous. The one man to block unanimity in the House was Representative J. T. Bernard (F.-L., Minn.), who succeeded in prolonging action by several hours—long enough to enable the *Mar Cantabrico* to slip out of New York harbor with $1,000,000 worth of the Spanish airplane order. Nevertheless the bill was attacked by the entire progressive group, most of whom voted for it with expressed prejudice. In the Senate the fight was led by Senator Nye (R., N. D.), who finally voted for the measure to keep the United States "from the danger of being drawn quickly into that war or strife in Europe." But, he added, "I hope it is not going to be done in the name of neutrality, for strictly speaking, it is not neutrality." And to Representative Amlie (P., Wis.), it was "an unfriendly act toward a government that is friendly."

Far greater congressional resistance was indicated for the President's relief-appropriation estimate. "Personally," said Progressive floor leader Boileau, "I will do all I possibly can to carry out the [Workers'] Alliance program. I believe that everyone in my group will work eagerly to increase the appropriation adequately." Proceeding on a grander scale, Senator Bone (D., Wash.), called together some thirty senators and representatives from western states to launch a strong campaign for increasing the amount over the President's request. Within two days Roosevelt sent a note to Speaker Bankhead on the subject, and this time raised his bid from $650,000,000 to $790,000,000.

In connection with his attitude toward the Supreme Court also, the President found himself confronted with a formidable opposition. Not only the progressive bloc pointed out the need for an amendment to the Constitution, but even such stalwarts as Senator Robinson (D., Ark.), majority leader of the Senate, and Speaker of the House Bankhead. Summing up the reaction of liberals in the House, Representative Sirovich (D., N.Y.), remarked that "without a check on the five fossils of the Supreme Court, the President's kind words about minimum wages and maximum hours, child labor and collective bargaining do not mean anything."

LENDING weight to the insistence on an amendment was the inspiring success with which a young and swiftly growing union of auto workers continued to tie up the monster General Motors Corporation (see page 6). Full-page advertisements in the country's leading dailies were used by Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., General Motors president, to obscure the issues at stake by fantastic charges of "labor dictatorship." "Will a labor organization run the plants of General Motors Corporation," ranted the $374,505-salaried Mr. Sloan, "or will the management continue to do so?"

Once more union officials attempted to clear the air by making plain their demands: right to represent G. M. workers in collective bargaining, abolition of the speed-up, end of the piece-work system, a thirty-hour week, a minimum wage agreement, maintenance of seniority rights, and reinstatement of those workers who were discharged for union activity, whatever the excuse.

Reverting to customary procedure, General Motors got out an injunction to oust strikers from the Flint plant. Source of the injunction: Judge Edward D. Black, owner of 3665 shares of General Motors stock, valued roughly at $220,000. From Homer Martin, president of the U.A.W.U., went a petition to the Michigan House of Representatives for impeachment proceedings against the Honorable Black.

More serious than the injunction, which the workers spurned, was the formation of the "Flint Alliance for Security of Our Jobs, Homes, and Our Community." From this quick-sprouting vigilante growth came the first violence of the strike, in the form of an attack on two union organizers. Guiding spirit of the Alliance was George E. Boysen, former mayor of Flint, and former paymaster at the Buick plant. A week of attempted conciliation on the part of Governor Murphy and three federal conciliators failed when General Motors declined to match a union concession with one of their own. The U.A.W.U. withdrew, as a condition for negotiating, its insistence on being the sole representative of all the workers for purposes of collective bargaining, but General Motors refused to enter into negotiations until all sit-down strikers abandoned the plants. Such a course, union officials pointed out, would be considered only on a guarantee from the corporation that no dies, used in making auto parts, would be removed, with the idea of starting production elsewhere. The guarantee was refused.

The seamen's strike on all coasts continued

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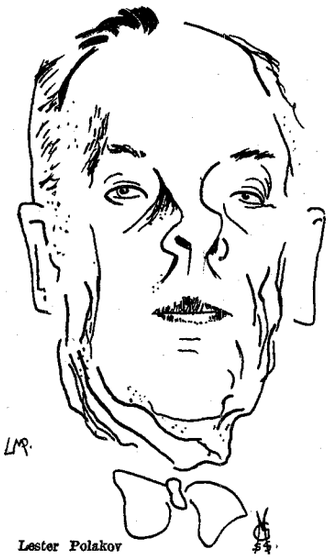
unabated despite the circulation of a wild tale manufactured and distributed by the shipowners. In the shippers' fantasy a split in the strikers' ranks had occurred along with a movement "to overthrow Joseph Curran." Quickly scotching the story, the strike council announced that negotiations were under way which would shortly "prove how effective the strike really is."

IN a week featured by the dangerous infiltration of German troops into Spanish Morocco, Nazi chief Hitler unburdened himself of a grim bit of humor. Summoning the diplomatic corps to his palace, he remarked: "I hope other nations will increasingly understand our honest will to make an essential contribution to the progress of all nations." And as for Nazi Germany, "this bulwark of genuine European culture and strong social justice is a more reliable element of European order than a turbulent state torn among many dissenting opinions and suffering from economic ills."

Hard as they tried, however, the other nations could see in Naziland no "honest will" to anything but war and chaos. Constituting a direct challenge to French interests in Northern Africa, as well as a blow at France's capacities for defense on the European mainland, the German army concentration in Spanish Morocco roused the Blum government, momentarily at least, from its policy of complacently trailing the British foreign office. Paris made public reports from its administrators in French Morocco revealing a steady flow of uniformed German military and naval detachments into the ports of Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish Morocco. Iron mines in the zone had been taken over by German "technicians." The harbor of Ceuta, sixteen miles from Gibraltar, was being speedily fortified under German supervision, a project which would enable the Nazis to challenge Britain's present control of the entrance to the Mediterranean.

Two French notes of warning, protesting the admission of the Germans and terming it a flagrant violation of Spanish treaty obligations, were presented to representatives of Franco's Burgos junta, and emphasized by an order from the French General Staff increasing the strength of the French garrison in Morocco from 40,000 men to 100,000. It was announced furthermore that the annual maneuvers of France's Atlantic fleet would be held along the Moroccan coast, in a "strategic position" with regard to the Spanish crisis. In a strong statement concerning the Moroccan situation, French Under-Secretary of State Tessan declared: "France will never permit a blow to be struck against the security of her communications, nor her vital interests."

This tendency toward a more energetic stand against Berlin in the Spanish crisis was successful to the extent of drawing from Hitler the statement: "Germany has no designs on Spain or its possessions." This seemed to quiet the French for the moment, although



General Motors' Sloan—gets $7200 a week

Hitler's promises fetch very little in the open market.

BRITAIN'S fleet, too, was reportedly preparing for a demonstration in the Mediterranean, but there was no evidence that Downing Street contemplated stiffening its attitude toward the Nazis. Official Britain, in fact, was reported to be viewing with satisfaction the probability that the Blum government would not indulge in any "provocative" moves in reply to the Nazi encroachments.

Earlier in the week Germany and Italy had rejected the Franco-British suggestion for an immediate ban on the traffic of "volunteers" to Spain. The rejection was cloaked in what was ostensibly a pledge to coöperate with the London Non-Intervention Committee in effecting similar measures. Lest the London Committee act on the matter, Germany attached a series of unattainable conditions upon which she made her acceptance of any agreement on "volunteers" contingent. Britain, nevertheless, was "encouraged" by the replies, and for her own part decreed a ban on enlistments, prompting one correspondent to remark: "... the British are anxious to keep the diplomatic ball rolling and to preserve the appearance of energetic activity. There is no real hope that this constant flow of notes back and forth will lead to effective neutrality." France followed with a similar ban, and while French and British anti-fascist volunteers were thus excluded from Spain, reports from Gibraltar stated that 3000 Japanese soldiers were expected to land at Cadiz to join the fascist insurgents.

Despite a week of bitter fighting, however, Franco's foreign reinforcements failed to carry him through the loyalists' lines northwest of Madrid. The fascists' inability to break the defense line in the first major action undertaken with large numbers of German troops caused high elation among Madrid's defenders. In University City, a fascist attack was converted into a counter-charge by the government forces, which succeeded in pushing back the besiegers and reopening several roads leading out of the city.

The fascists renewed air bombardments of Madrid, killing more than a hundred persons. In a night raid German planes bombed the British embassy, injuring two English citizens and bringing a diplomatic rebuke from London. Coming simultaneously with details of the death and destruction wrought by fascist bombings, was a press-service account of the heroic feats of a loyalist committee charged with safeguarding Madrid's art treasures from rebel artillery, air bombings, and incendiarism. When fascist bombers attacked the Prado Museum and the palace of the Duke of Alba in Madrid, said the report, "Disdaining danger, Communist militiamen in charge of the palace managed to save the greater part of its priceless treasure."

An announcement made during the week concerning fascist Italy's financial condition sheds light on some of the imponderables of Il Duce's foreign policy. Italy's budget for the coming fiscal year calls for a deficit of more than three and a half million lire, as compared with a surplus of thirty million lire in last year's budget. The deficit quoted does not include sums to be spent for rearmament and for the exploitation of Ethiopia.

The Soviet Union's yearly inventory, announced at about the same time, presented a somewhat different picture. Its budgetary status allowed the Soviet government to proclaim itself "the most solvent in the world." Reports from five commissariats, covering all branches of the national economy, showed that 1936 had been a banner year for Soviet industry. Not only did heavy industry, which produced one-third more goods than it had during the previous year, exceed the year's plan, but the output of the food industry was 29 percent above that of 1935. And production of consumers' goods exceeded last year's total by a third. Hailed as the salient victory of the year, however, was the general increase in labor productivity, attributed mainly to the unleashing of individual initiative through the Stakhanov system.

Coinciding with the publication of this record of success was the arrival in Tampico, Mexico, of Leon Trotsky, enemy of the Soviet regime in word and deed, and long the prophet of its collapse. Mexican officials felt it judicious to maintain great secrecy with regard to the details of Trotsky's landing. The Mexican Workers' Federation, most powerful trade-union body in the country, had, previous to his arrival, scored Trotsky's admittance to Mexico. The federation saw in his presence the danger of division within the ranks of the labor movement and condemned his theories as inimical to the spirit of the progressive Cárdenas administration. Typical of the welcome from Mexican tories that greeted Trotsky was the comment of the reactionary clerical newspaper *El Hombre Libre*. Even going so far as to commend its arch enemy, Cárdenas, for allowing Trotsky to enter the country, the paper proclaimed: "Let Trotsky come to expose the venal Communists."

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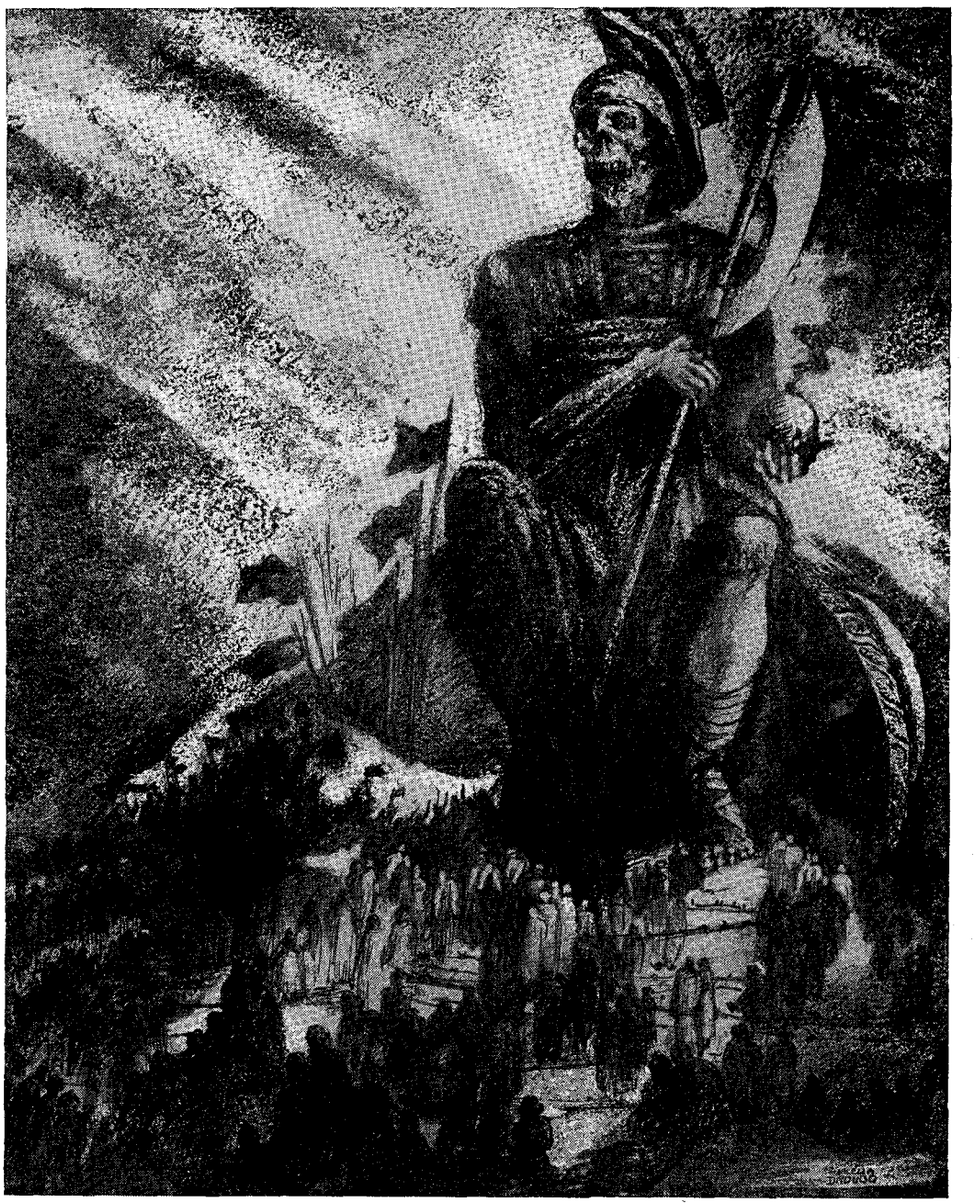
Outlook for 1937

A paralyzing blindness has obscured the menacing aspect of recent events, says the author, who sees a crisis looming

By R. Palme Dutt

AT the opening of 1937 the question of war and peace dominates the minds of all. Not suddenly, but by a continuous progression since 1931, we are advancing into general war. There is no longer an abrupt dividing line as in 1914. It is a new world situation; and its very newness is creating a paralysis of confusion just when there should be the sharpest clearness of action. War has now reached Europe. What began as war in the Far East in 1931-2 (we drew the deduction at the time that the first stage of the war crisis had opened, arising out of the world economic crisis, and would continuously extend, unless a stand were made by the peoples, until it involved Europe and the world), has now gone forward stage by stage, through the establishment of the Nazi dictatorship in Central Europe in 1933 and the consequent new rearmament race and destruction of treaties, through the first attempted foreign coup of fascism by Hitler in Austria in 1934, through the first open aggressive colonial war of fascism by Mussolini in Africa in 1935, until we have now reached by 1936 the reality of war in Europe, of direct aggressive war by the two leading European fascist powers against a major European state to overthrow its government. This war is still in a preliminary half-veiled form, corresponding to the new conditions and technique. German and Italian armies have landed in Spain. The bombardment of Shanghai in 1932 has been answered by the bombardment of Madrid in 1936. The German-Japanese pact, with Italian adhesion, openly expresses the war-challenge of fascism to the world. Japan drives forward its invasion of China, arousing the united resistance of the Chinese people. Nazi Germany dominates or terrorizes the smaller states of Europe, and turns its guns on Czechoslovakia. Yet there is still no effective mobilization of the popular forces for peace to meet this menace. Millions still ask whether war is coming, when war is all around us. Amid universal apprehension, there is still universal impotence and confusion. There is still speculation on the hypothesis of a repetition of 1914, instead of facing the realities of 1937. There are still dreams of passive isolation escaping the storm of fascism's war. On this basis fascism advances year by year and month by month. A palace crisis can distract the attention of a nation, while fascism lands its troops in a neighboring state. *This blindness to the conflagration at our doors is the paradox and peril of our time.*

It is only necessary to compare the situation at the beginning of 1936 with its close in order to recognize the accelerating pace of events. At the beginning of 1936 Laval still ruled in France. George V was king in England, and the Baldwin government had just emerged from the Hoare-Laval crisis by making a show of shedding Hoare. Spain was under Zamora and Reaction. Locarno was still in force. Italy had not yet entered on the poison-gas path to the conquest of Ethiopia. Japan was still participating in the London naval conference. The changes of the succeeding twelve months are so great that the picture of the beginning of 1936 is like the picture of a vanished world.



Marcella Broudo

What has fascism's advance shown in 1936? Five cardinal events stand out. In March Germany occupied the Rhineland and tore up Locarno. In May Italy occupied Addis Ababa and proclaimed the conquest of Ethiopia. In July Germany and Italy began their armed aggression on Spain, at first with the supply of tanks, bombing aeroplanes, and pilots, while utilizing Africans, foreign mercenaries, and native reactionary officers for the fighting, then—as this proved insufficient against the united resistance of the Spanish people—by the direct dispatch of armies in December. In September the Nazi Nuremberg Congress pro-

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claimed the war-crusade against Communism and Democracy; and Hitler's speech held out the prospect of rich spoils by the domination of the Ukraine, the Urals, and Siberia ("if we had at our disposal the incalculable wealth and stores of raw material of the Ural Mountains, the vast forests of Siberia and the unending fertile plains of the Ukraine to be exploited under National-Socialist leadership"—Hitler; "Germany has given the signal for the world struggle"—Goebbels). In November, following fifteen months' negotiations between the military staffs, the German-Japanese pact—ostensibly for joint action against "Communism" both "at home and abroad"—was signed.

Alongside these five major acts of aggression and proclamations of aggressive aims may be set the doubling of military service in Germany in August; the drawing over of Belgium, as shown in King Leopold's speech in October; the establishment of control over Austria by the German-Austrian agreement in July; and the increasing penetration of the Balkans, especially Jugoslavia and Rumania (with the driving out of Titulesco) to break the Little Entente and isolate Czechoslovakia, together with the establishment of the Nazi-inspired Metaxas dictatorship in Greece. Nazi-Fascist domination or increasing influence has thus been built up through an extending range of Continental Europe from Algeciras to Helsingfors and from Brussels to Athens.

WHAT HAS been Democracy's reply to this enlarging offensive of fascism? Hitler's armed occupation of the Rhineland and tearing up of Locarno was received with acquiescence; French proposals for counter-measures were overruled by Britain; and Britain has devoted its diplomatic endeavors for the rest of the year to replacing Locarno by an isolationist western-European treaty, as desired by Germany, which would exclude eastern Europe, and would in particular—it is important to note—exclude Czechoslovakia, previously guaranteed under the old Locarno group of treaties. Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia in defiance of the League has been met by the retreat of the League and withdrawal of sanctions; although the British-French endeavor to ratify fascism's spoliation by hounding the Ethiopian delegates out of the League fell through against the opposition of the smaller states, led by the Soviet Union. The armed aggression of Hitler and Mussolini against Spain has been met by the brilliant British-French device (actually in origin British, but sponsored through France as catspaw) of "non-intervention," which—like the previous "equal" embargo on arms to Italy and Ethiopia that effectively disarmed the victim while his aggressor prepared—disarmed the Spanish democratic government and cut off support from the democratic states, while the fascist powers freely armed the fascist forces. Once again only the Soviet Union has made a stand on behalf of democracy, defense against aggression, and collective peace. This over the three main conflicts of the year has been official democracy's sorry record of comp ete and continuous capitulation before each new aggression of fascism.

To complete the picture, the role of the United States of America should not be left out of account. At the Inter-American Conference at Buenos Aires, President Roosevelt spoke of the close connection of the menace of war with fascism even if he did not specifically name the enemy in so many words. He spoke of the necessity of strengthening democracy in order to strengthen peace, and of the menace of war arising from those states which had abandoned democratic processes, which "loudly proclaim that they require war as an instrument of their policy," and were building up their whole economy on the basis of colossal rearmament:

> We know that nations guilty of these follies inevitably face the day either when their weapons of destruction must be used against their neighbors, or when an unsound economy, like a house of cards, will fall apart.

The reference to Japan in the first place, and to Nazi Germany in the second place (whose penetration and even colonial designs in South America begin to be feared by the United States), is clear. But the practical conclusion to be drawn is less clear. The American aim was stated by the chairman of the United States delegation, Cordell Hull, to be to "remove war from the Western Hemisphere." Once again, as with Britain, the hope that all may be well so long as the fascist expansion does not take place in "our" region.

CERTAINLY, there are big positive achievements on the side of the people's mobilization and fight against fascism's offensive in 1936, even though these have not yet transformed the governmental policies in the democratic countries in western Europe and America. The People's Front in France swept the elections of May, placed the Blum government in power, forced through the dissolution of the fascist leagues (not yet by any means the end of the menace of fascism in France, but representing a heavy blow against fascism), and led the way to a torrential advance of working-class strength and organization, as well as the winning of social and economic demands on a wide front. The Franco-Soviet Pact has been ratified in 1936, and still stands against the combined assault of Hitler and Baldwin. In the sphere of foreign policy the record of the Blum government has failed the needs of the struggle, above all in relation to Spain; but the key to this weakness lies in the overwhelming reactionary pressure of the British National government. The People's Front in Spain swept the elections in February and placed a Left government in power; and although that Left government failed to take adequate measures against the fascists before the rising, as urged by the Communists in repeated warnings, it was thanks to the People's Front that Spain has been able to show the world for the first time how a united people can fight and defeat fascism, in a struggle whose scale and significance exceeds every previous struggle in Europe since 1917.

Above all, 1936 has shown in the new Soviet Constitution the realization of socialism in the largest and most powerful state in the world. Consequent on the disappearance of the exploiting classes and of the old class distinctions, proletarian democracy has necessarily advanced still further into the universal democracy of a socialist society, into what is essentially classless democracy or real democracy for all. This advance and strengthening

William Hernandez

"Twenty thousand for fifty strikebreakers. Oh well, easy come, easy go."

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Louis Sarlin

of democracy on the basis of socialism has taken place at the very same time as the capitalist world is revealing, not only the open attack of fascism on the whole basis of democracy, but the increasing restriction of democratic rights even in those countries which still retain the democratic forms. The whole fight for democracy against fascism has thus taken on a deeper meaning in present conditions, and become, in unity with the fight for peace, the key expression of the present stage of social struggle. In the same way the role of the Soviet Union in the fight for peace becomes more and more clearly, to the widest sections in all countries, the role of world leadership in the whole fight for liberty and civilization against the assault of fascist barbarism. In the words of Stalin at the Soviet Congress:

> What has been achieved in the U.S.S.R. is fully possible of achievement in other countries also. From this it follows that the international significance of the new constitution of the U.S.S.R. can hardly be exaggerated. Today, when the turbid wave of fascism is bespattering the socialist movement of the working class and besmirching the democratic strivings of the best people in the civilized world, the new constitution of the U.S.S.R. will be an indictment against fascism, declaring that socialism and democracy are invincible. The new constitution of the U.S.S.R. will serve as moral assistance and real support to all those who are today fighting fascist barbarism.

BUT IF we take stock of the world situation as a whole, we are compelled to recognize that it is in Britain throughout 1936 that we find the most serious weakness of the front against fascism in the democratic countries, and the consequent key to fascism's undoubted advance in 1936, despite the heroic struggle in Spain, the successes of the People's Front in France, and the triumphant strength of socialism in the Soviet Union. The National government in Britain has succeeded in carrying out and securing acceptance of a policy which, under cover of supposedly peaceful aims of "neutrality," "impartiality," "non-intervention," etc., has in fact protected each step of fascist aggression, while strangling democratic resistance. The National government has succeeded in carrying through this policy because of the absence of effective mobilization of opposition to the National government, because of the prevention so far of an inclusive united working-class front and popular front, because of the coöperation of the opposition leadership with the National government at critical points (non-intervention, rearmament, constitutional crisis), because, in short, of the policy summed up in the Edinburgh Labour Party Conference. This has exercised a decisive and menacing influence on the international situation.

It is no secret that the supposed Blum policy of "non-intervention" in Spain was in reality engineered by the National government and forced on Blum. As one of the best informed foreign correspondents, Robert Dell, wrote in the New York *Nation* on October 31:

> After the visit of Léon Blum and Yvon Delbos to London in July, visitors to the Foreign Office were told: "We have never had to do with French Ministers so easy to deal with." . . . *It was during the visit to London that the British government proposed the policy of "non-intervention" in Spain*—that is, the policy of intervention against the Spanish government. Delbos was won over to it at once, but Blum was strongly opposed to it. Soon afterwards the British ambassador in Paris informed Blum that if Germany attacked France because the Spanish government obtained war material from France, the British government would not consider it an "unprovoked attack" within the meaning of the Treaty of Locarno and therefore would not go to the aid of France.

This has been subsequently confirmed by the publication of the official letter of De Los Rios, Spanish representative at Geneva (now ambassador to the United States) on July 25, reporting to the Spanish government Blum's promise to dispatch war material; the authenticity of this has not been contested by the French Foreign Office. In fact, we may criticize Blum as much as we will for his weakness. But the real criminal in the betrayal of democracy and peace to the open fascist aggression in Spain is the British National government; and the heaviest responsibility in consequence rests on the labor movement in Britain, which accepted this policy for three fateful months (actually in the name of helping and backing Blum! what a height of hypocrisy!) and has since not fought against it.

IN THE SAME WAY, British policy in relation to Hitler, while consistently in public expression stressing the menace of Hitler's armaments and on this basis putting in the forefront the necessity of British rearmament, has no less consistently refused the line of general collective defense, which could alone check the menace of aggression, on the grounds that this would mean lining up with the democratic peace camp, in unity with the Soviet Union, against the reactionary camp, and that Britain must remain "neutral" from "both camps." Hence the reality of British policy concentrates increasingly on isolationist rearmament, western-European security, and the maintenance of the Empire, while rejecting collective peace. This was the significance of Eden's speech at Leamington in November defining British commitments, and immediately echoed by Delbos in the French Chamber. The significance of Eden's speech was not merely that he stressed British commitments as being confined to western Europe, the Empire, Egypt, and Iraq, but that he no less specifically (and this point was immediately taken up by the fascist press) excluded any commitments under the Covenant of the League and declared them to be optional. The Conservative press begins to warn Czechoslovakia to make the best terms it can with Hitler. This is the policy of "pseudo-neutrality" which opens the way to fascist war.

The German-Japanese treaty is the inevitable consequence of this British "neutral" policy of surrender to fascism. In fact the German-Japanese treaty—and herein is expressed the typical contradiction of the present British foreign policy—is far from pleasing to British official opinion. They see clearly enough that its point is not merely directed against the Soviet Union, but also against the extremely vulnerable British Empire. The London *Times,* which had already written of the reported triple alliance of Germany, Japan, and Italy as an alliance of "thieves" (thereby expressing the objections of the richest brigand to the fascist brigands' projects for the redivision of the spoils), affirmed that the German-Japanese treaty contains secret clauses directed against British interests in the Far East:

> There are rumors, probably not without substance, that the agreement provides for the establishment of

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German and Japanese spheres of economic—ultimately political—influence in the Dutch East Indies; a development which would certainly react upon our position at Hong Kong and Singapore. (November 26, 1936.)

Similarly, the *Economist* recently wrote of the reported Triple Alliance of Germany, Japan, and Italy:

This is one of the most significant events that has happened in the international arena since 1918. It may prove to be the nemesis for Anglo-French hesitation in the cause of collective security. It is obviously a piece of news which ought to be received with even greater concern in London than in Moscow.

The easier option for a Triple Alliance is not Russia, but the British Empire; for, unlike Russia, the British Empire lies strategically at the mercy of this particular combination. (November 21, 1936.)

The dominant Conservative policy of "security" by isolationist rearmament and leaving Hitler a "free hand in the East" is getting into heavy straits.

It will be seen that British Conservative foreign policy is increasingly torn with contradictions, and sharp conflicts of opposing sections and tendencies may be expected in the coming year. This situation offers unrivaled possibilities for a popular offensive for a positive peace policy in unity with the peace forces in France and other countries, and with the Soviet Union. Such an offensive, however, can be conducted only on the basis of implacable hostility against the National government and its policy of "pseudo-neutrality," which in fact assists the path of fascist aggression and war. Herein lies the crux of the issue of foreign policy in Britain. Underlying the policy of "pseudo-neutrality" is the *theory of the two blocs.* Behind this theory is hidden the real support of the drive toward fascism and war.

The theory of the two blocs presents a picture of British policy as a policy of "neutrality" and "peace," seeing the menace of the world being divided into two "doctrinal" or "ideological" blocs of fascism and communism, and seeking to prevent Britain being lined up with either.

As regards the attitude of His Majesty's government, they have explicitly deprecated any tendency to divide the world into conflicting camps, especially on ideological grounds. (Eden, in the House of Commons, November 30, 1936.)

The refusal of this country to be drawn into any conflict of so-called "ideologies" is absolute. It has become necessary to repeat this refusal as Mr. Eden has repeated it because there is a persistent demand that this country should declare itself in favor of one or other of the "ideologies" that afflict mankind. ("Principles of British Foreign Policy," Diplomatic Correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian,* November 25, 1936.)

British foreign policy has been to prevent at all costs a line-up of fascist and anti-fascist States. (*Daily Herald,* November 26, 1936.)

Under this guise the real foreign policy of the National government is presented to popular opinion as a policy of peace.

Nor is this only a question of the direct propaganda of the National government, and

Linoleum cut by Sid Gotcliffe

of the official press from the *Times* to the *Daily Herald.* It receives additional support from pro-fascist and right-wing conservative isolationism on the one side, and from sections of abstract pacifism on the other. How abstract pacifism, with whatever original intentions, turns into a positively reactionary force of support for the National government's policy of so-called "neutrality" and for free play for the fascist war offensive, is abundantly illustrated from Bertrand Russell's recent book *Which Way to Peace?* Russell writes with at any rate a commendable explicitness which should open the eyes of many who may have been blind thus far to the real character of abstract pacifism:

The friend of peace in France should work against the Franco-Soviet alliance. The friend of peace in Great Britain should oppose commitments to Russia, and to France in so far as is possible without breach of faith. In America he should support the policy of neutrality. He should avoid the crusading spirit, as shown, for example, in relation to Abyssinia and Spain (p. 192).

The Germans would like to be let alone while they attack Russia. . . . Perhaps after a successful campaign against Russia, the Germans would feel satisfied and grow less warlike (p. 156).

No support for Ethiopia. No support for Spain. No unity with the Soviet Union. It will be seen that a single thread runs through all this policy of abstract pacifism. Absolute pacifism has completed the circle and ended up on the side of fascism, the policy of absolute war.

The whole falsity of the theory of the two blocs is that it conceals and distorts the issue of peace or war into an issue of "two blocs." *But in fact there are not two blocs.* There is only one bloc—the war bloc of fascism. There is only one offensive—the offensive of fascism. This is the offensive of Germany, Italy, and Japan, together with Franco and their satellites in all countries. It is this offensive which, through the tacit support of leading reactionary sections in the foremost imperialist countries, has in successive forms constituted the war crisis since 1931 and now brings ever closer the menace of world war. Against this war menace it is necessary to combine the peoples of the world for peace. No such combination yet exists. If it did exist, the menace of war would be checked. There is here no question of a rival bloc, but of the defense of peace. The Franco-Soviet pact and the Czechoslovak-Soviet pact do not represent a rival bloc, because they are equally open to Germany to enter on the basis of the common maintenance of peace; and precisely this Nazi Germany refuses, thereby creating the division. For Britain then to take this division as an excuse for refusing to come out on the side of peace is not a policy of peace, but a policy of assisting fascist aggression and accelerating the advance of war.

WILL THE popular forces throughout the world combine in time to check the offensive of fascism and its headlong advance to war? Above all, will unity of the working class and of the popular forces in Britain be achieved in time to defeat the reactionary policy of the National government which in reality lies behind the advance of this offensive? These are the burning questions of the present moment, which are reaching their height in 1937. To present this issue as an abstract ultimate issue of "communism or fascism" is a trick of Reaction at the present moment to prevent the united mobilization of the popular forces. The present immediate issue over Europe, the issue that is being fought in Spain, is no ultimate issue of the future form of society or of final goals. These underlying social questions will have to be settled by the peoples in the future; the immediate issue is more elementary, and is the condition of further advance. Anyone with eyes in his head can see that in hard fact the actual concrete struggle which is going on today is a struggle for peace and democratic institutions against the offensive of fascism. Only the enemies of peace, the reactionaries and pro-fascists, seek to conceal this issue, which concerns the entire working population of every country in the capitalist world today.

ON THE success of mobilizing all the popular forces for this struggle depends the outcome of the next stage before us. In this present struggle all the future is contained. And it is this struggle that is likely to reach its decisive height in 1937.

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Welcome, Mr. Milton, to Miami

A smart manipulator of easy money is urged to winter where he can take the good with the bad

By W. C. Kelly

DAVID M. MILTON, son-in-law of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., can now consider that he is a Rockefeller by his own spurs as well as by marriage. I have been reading his recent testimony before the Securities & Exchange Commission in Washington, D. C., looking into "investment" trusts, and believe it is safe to say that Mr. Milton has qualified as one of the leading citizens of the land, perhaps in the "ten best" for 1936, by his admitted investment-trust maneuvers in getting control of $218,000,000 worth of life insurance companies with a cash outlay of only $13,000. Among other coups, he then sold one of the life insurance companies to its own policy holders, taking a profit of $800,000. A great many of those who have performed both larger and lesser services for their country now await Mr. Milton in metropolitan Miami, where they have come to get away from the harsh cold of a northern winter, and, on behalf of the local Chambers of Commerce, I urge Mr. Milton to get on down here. The Florida sun in January, February, and March need not be all of the reward for his services to mankind, but it can be a part of it. At the same time I counsel against his stopping off at Ormond Beach to visit his grandfather-in-law, John D., Sr. The old man was no slouch in his day and he might, just as a joke, of course, pick Mr. Milton's pockets of the money that he milked from the policy holders of the General American Life Insurance Co. It is best not to stop off in Palm Beach, too. Colonel Bradley is there with his successful gambling house, and it is not so easy to get the better of the astute colonel as it is to fleece the people with a sure thing, like a whole basketful of phony investment trusts. Miami is really a very nice place in the winter, if you are cold and a northern capitalist. It is a different matter if you are only cold.

Mr. Milton will probably not stay long in Miami proper, however, when he gets down, if he does what most of his friends do. He will proceed immediately to the gold coast of Miani Beach, a few miles away, across Biscayne Bay. The trip from Miami across a long causeway to Miami Beach is one of those usually described as "picturesque." Mr. Milton will see, with a New Yorkish Miami skyline for a backdrop, many large private yachts in the bay. These will include the 350-foot *Alva,* owned by W. K. Vanderbilt, and the 225-foot *Winchester,* owned by General Cornelius Vanderbilt III. The Vanderbilts like Miami. Looking over on Palm Island, Mr. Milton might see the palatial residence of Al Capone, with a Hollywood swimming pool and everything. Brother Ralph Capone recently saved Al's residence from foreclosure by federal income tax liens, at Al's direction. The Capones like Miami.

Now, there is no guarantee that Mr. Milton will not lose some of his hard-earned fortune while sojourning in Miami Beach, but Miami Beach is a kind of paradise. Miami Beach almost makes up for everything else. Miami Beach is better than Palm Beach—more beauty, more women, more money, more business for the New York Stock Exchange, more drinking and gambling. It is a city of resort hotels and apartment houses, fine winter residences, bars, restaurants, night clubs, and gambling dens, in a setting of royal and cocoanut palms. Miami Beach caters exclusively to northern capitalists. Mr. Milton has been around and can probably take care of himself in Miami Beach. But he will have to watch out for such business men as Joe Spitali, of New York, who testified in court last summer that he was a part owner of the swanky Town Casino Club in Miami Beach, a favorite spot for society gamblers. And there is Bernarr Macfadden. Bernarr is on the Beach with a combination health resort and night club. It might be all right for Mr. Milton to attend

John Mackey

Notes on Social Activities

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the night club, if he stays reasonably sober, but neither I nor the local Chamber of Commerce can guarantee Mr. Milton's personal safety if he chooses to frequent the health resort.

Miami Beach is not a large city, having a permanent population of only 13,000, but in the winter season there is a population of 60,000. Miami proper has 120,000 population, with about 250,000 in the winter. But as I have said, Mr. Milton should enjoy Miami Beach anyway, as life there is very agreeable for the northern capitalist. In the morning, the brokerage offices at the big Beach hotels, between swims, sunbaths, and drinks. In the afternoon, the horse races at Hialeah Park. With an optional mixture of golf, polo, tennis, fishing in the Gulf Stream, etc. At night, several of the many night clubs that are imported from Broadway. It would be unfair, though, to have Mr. Milton think that life here is not without its hardships even for the northern capitalist. The smell of some sun-tan oils is difficult to put up with. Millionaires on private yachts go fishing in the Gulf Stream all day sometimes without a catch. And the thermometer does not hit 75 or 80 every day! It usually does, but there are days. . . . The tail end of a winter storm from the north may send the mercury down here to the point where it is almost necessary to stay in bed to be comfortably warm. Not many of even the best local accommodations provide artificial heat. It is considered poor Miami psychology. But a day in bed now and then does the leisure class good. They have no work they have to do anyway, and Miami Beach social life takes a lot out of a person. During the brief cold waves the Miami newspapers actually succeed in keeping many winter visitors warm with banner headlines about how much colder it is in New York. Somewhere hidden in the body of the news stories will be the truth that the below-zero temperatures quoted are at remote points in the Adirondacks.

Although thoughtful Miami Beach officials have made no special plans to protect Mr. Milton from other business men while he is here, it is interesting to observe that Miami Beach has ordinances requiring that practically every worker employed in the city be photographed and fingerprinted. These records are then sent to federal government bureaus at Washington. This is a new regulation in our country and has already been given wide publicity by the now-and-then liberal journalist, Westbrook Pegler. Mr. Milton may have read Pegler's comments but would still not like the idea of being fingerprinted himself for the protection of the workers. Mr. Milton need have no fears. The present administrations in Miami Beach, Miami, and the state of Florida have no intentions of ever fingerprinting capitalists. But they do arrest workers who come down here and can't find a job and put them in jail on vagrancy charges for from ten to sixty days. This is a measure taken to protect Mr. Milton and his associates from "petty thievery."

Sonnet 19

Hearing a bird chirp, on a late November
Morning when I was all alone with thought
Opening a door of air, through which I caught
A sense of life my heart and flesh remember.

So the green meadow starred with the white flower,
Not the white violet, or immortelle,
But such a flower as dwells where symbols dwell,
In life not measured by the line and hour;

A poem that I read in sleep, relating
How welcome to those English folk, their dead
Came at their outdoor meal, and broke their bread;
But most of all, that flashlike knowledge waiting

Just on the inner edge of the first sleep—
These are faint fragments of a Bliss most deep.

SARAH N. CLEGHORN.

★

The Florida state police last season turned back 50,000 workers at the state line and will probably turn back more this season. But they will not turn back Mr. Milton or any of his friends. The Miami police will even be considerate enough of the tender sensibilities of Mr. Milton not to have the local Negro chain gangs working on the roads between Miami Beach and Hialeah Park, or Miami Beach and the other gambling centers. These Negro chain gangs are made up out of the 36,000 local Negro population, not criminals but offenders of the most petty sort. At present an official reign of terror is being directed against the Miami Negroes. By the device of haling alleged petty offenders into county court instead of city court, Negroes are herded on to the chain gang. They are further terrorized by the Ku-Klux Klan, which threatens openly in the press to police the Negro district.

WHEN Mr. Milton comes down to Miami Beach, I wish he would get in touch with me and we will go over to Miami to see where the workers who built the slick, gleaming winter paradise on the Beach, live. Most of them are Negroes. In the Miami Negro district, right off downtown Miami, he will see one of the most congested shack slums in the country, with scant facilities for sanitation or lighting, exorbitant rents, no bathing or recreational facilities of any kind, and, of course, Negroes are not permitted to bathe in the Atlantic Ocean. The *Miami Herald* admitted that in 1930 the density of population in the Negro area was twice as great as that in New York City. Since then the Negro population has increased from 25,000 to 36,000, with an estimated 50,000 in winter. After Mr. Milton and I have taken a look at conditions there, we will go on out to the northwest edge of Miami where we will see Liberty City, a new $900,000 P.W.A. housing project, which has just been completed by the federal government. Here in these two, three, four, and five-room modern bungalows, 243 Negro families will live, at a rent of less than $5 per room per month. Some of the backward white workers, victims of race prejudice fostered by the Southern ruling class, have looked at these new Negro homes and complained, comparing them with the dumps in which they themselves have to live, that Liberty City is "too good for niggers." Two hundred and forty-three Negro families out of a population of 36,000 is only a straw in the wind—and please observe that Miami real estate interests are protected by the miniature scale of the project—but it is a good straw. Mr. Milton may not think it would be a good thing for the white workers to unite with the Negro workers to demand more federal housing projects for all, but it would be the best thing that could happen for Miami and the whole country.

MR. MILTON may not come to Miami if all that is offered is to show him how the majority of the people live here, plus a lot of sunshine, drinking, gambling, etc., for there are people in Mr. Milton's group who aren't interested in anything else in the world except making a lot of easy money, quick. If this is the case with Mr. Milton, I don't want him to hold back. The chambers of commerce here don't want him to hold back. Miami and Miami Beach are in the midst of a steady building boom, ranking twelfth and thirteenth among American cities in 1936 in building permits, with over $12,000,000 each. There were thirty-eight new hotels built in Miami Beach in the last twelve months. Real-estate values are still increasing, and some of the capitalists have begun to fear another boom, like the 1925 Florida land boom. That is an interesting characteristic of capitalism in its present stage of pernicious anæmia: business is afraid there will not be prosperity and then, again, business is afraid there will be. So there you are. You can take it, Mr. Milton, or leave it. Some day, though, in the not-far-distant future, there will be a real boom here in Miami and the city will really achieve the million population they dreamed of back in the days of the 1925 boom. There is more sunshine in southeast Florida in the winter than anywhere in the United States, and the workers, farmers, and professionals will come down here by the hundreds of thousands for their health and on their vacations. You had better come now, Mr. Milton, while you can.

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Topics of the Times

Our soft-job scout locates another honey in the sanctum of a gent who writes certain tasty titbits for a metropolitan morning daily

By Robert Forsythe

IN looking around for a cushy job I think that next to being a war correspondent I should like to be Simeon Strunsky. The world-famous or something column known as "Topics of the *Times*" is Mr. Strunsky's medium of expression, and in five years he has not once been wrong. This is a record even for the New York *Times* and one looks behind it for the secret of such accuracy.

The secret seems to be that Mr. Strunsky has centered his attention almost entirely upon the Soviet Union and has perfected a method which is practically foolproof. Whatever the Soviet Union does is wrong and hence everything Mr. Strunsky writes about the Soviet Union is correct.

Mr. Strunsky—I refer to him so politely because he is an ex-Socialist—writes, for example, of the family in the Soviet Union. The family is dead, says Mr. Strunsky. The mothers have become shock-brigaders, the children spend their lives in crêches, and the fathers change so rapidly that the children look upon a male parent as something which comes by on the assembly line. And this is the model which the Soviet Union wishes the rest of the world to follow, remarks Mr. Strunsky with mild irony.

However, before anybody can point out to Mr. Strunsky that this is not exactly a faithful picture of conditions in the Dark Land of the Moujiks, a change has come over family relationships in the U.S.S.R. Papa and Mama are now living together in a state of connubial bliss, the children are allowed to come home for an hour on Saturday afternoon and say hello to the folks. An occasional meal is even eaten in the bosom of the family. Well, says Mr. Strunsky, where are all your ideas about a new life now? Back to the old bourgeois state of existence, eh?

During the first years of intensive industrialization of Russia, it was plain to Mr. Strunsky that those hairy-handed fellows from the steppes would never be able to build a Bulova watch. The idea itself was amusing. But when the horny-handed fellows from Samarkand began to build watches and machine shops and locomotives, Mr. Strunsky was right there with the retort. Where are all the Soviet ideas about freeing Man from the Machine? Back to the old treadmill, eh?

It's impossible to beat a Strunsky. We may as well get used to it. Among other things he is a great one for democracy. The last thing we want in this land of plenty is the doctrine of that repudiated German, Karl Marx. America is not Russia and never will be. I abominate the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, I hate Communism, says Mr. Strunsky. Democracy for me, first and always. But he becomes almost indignant about the prospect of democracy in the Soviet Union. It seems that the revolution has been sold out. Where are all those brave ideas about changing the world? In the first place, Russia is never going to have a democracy because it is only a plot by Stalin to make Trotsky mad, and in the second place if there is a democracy it's a sign that the socialistic state is a failure.

By this time a notion of the general outline of the Strunsky job will have begun to make an impression on the reader. If there is any better position in the journalistic field, I wish you would wire me at your expense. If in the early days Russia asked for total disarmament, that (according to the Strunsky reasoning) was only because they were so weak they couldn't possibly fight. If now the Soviet Union asks for disarmament and peace, it is because they are seeking to mislead their enemies. It also shows, says Strunsky, that the U.S.S.R. is as warlike as any imperialistic power. Look at the size of the Russian army!

I have forgotten what Mr. Strunsky had to say about Shostakovitch's opera, *Lady Macbeth from Mzensk,* when it was produced here several years ago, but I should think he would follow rather closely the critical opinions of his colleague, Mr. Olin Downes, who thought it was pretty bad. If it had been an opera in the repertory of the Metropolitan Opera, Mr. Downes would have pounded at it until the director decided to take it off. However, when the Russian critics began panning Shostakovitch, Mr. Strunsky was very sardonic about it. The Russian critics might not like the music but where was their vaunted freedom for the artist? The authorities might think Shostakovitch was on the wrong track, but it was clearly their duty to furnish him an opera house, an orchestra, a cast of principals, and a chorus for anything he might care to write. This was just another proof that the socialistic state couldn't work.

"Mr. Lippmann. . . . Mr. Hill. . . . General Johnson. . . . Don't tell me, let me guess."

Never was there an author who had such a field. Collectivization of the farms will patently not work because human nature is not built that way. When collectivization works it is (Strunsky always speaking . . . always) a sign of the most horrid regimentation. When the peasant is given his own cow and horse and pig and yet remains a member of the Collective, that to Strunsky is just an indication that the whole Soviet idea has collapsed, and we are back to capitalism.

The man has an astonishing mind. It flies around like a top, giving off sparks with every revolution and producing more heat than reason. Every morning in the *Times* he is absolutely right. The next morning he is right again. If there were an afternoon edition, he could be right twice-a-day and once on Sunday. The act can play on indefinitely. If there is nothing else hot at the moment, there is always Trotsky. Nobody can go wrong on Trotsky because he is another gentleman who is always right. Any action by the Soviet Union in the field of international politics is manifestly wrong because Trotsky would have done it in another way if he were still there. Leon Trotsky is the Simeon Strunsky of Mexico. If they don't get together it will be one of the social and literary tragedies of the period. Between them they will reach a decision about the Soviet Union. Obviously it is no longer a socialistic state and just as obviously it is not a capitalistic state. Well, what is it? It will be then that the collaboration of Leon and Simeon will reach its apogee. They will go into a huddle at the foot of Mt. Popocatepetl and come forth with a statement which will be issued to the press by a secretary who, for want of a better name, we may call Anita Brenner.

"The Soviet Union?" the statement will read. "We have looked into the matter, have considered all the contradictions, have taken soundings and examined the vital statistics, and have reached our decision. The Soviet Union does not exist. It is a myth."

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A Note on the Modern Dance

Instantaneousness of intelligibility and effectiveness before mass audiences raise some fundamental questions in its aesthetic

By Owen Burke

THE modern dance movement in America becomes a popular movement; a popular movement demands simplicity; simplicity of form and clarity of statement. On the other hand, it is necessary to realize that such leaders in the dance field as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman have come through a middle-class tradition that emphasized in dance (as in literature, music, etc.) subtlety, reticence, obscurity. When Tamiris, whose experience was similarly rooted, breaks through this particular mold, the bruises are quite apparent.

The business of developing a proletarian dance form may lie ultimately with the younger dancers. But the more finished, the more important work is still being done by these maturer pioneers. Doris Humphrey's *With My Red Fires,* Weidman's *Quest* (both on the bill at the New York Hippodrome Friday, January 15), Tamiris's anti-lynch *Momentum,* Martha Graham's anti-imperialist *Chronicle* are important not only for their architectural and political significance, but for the leadership of the artists in the field.

Obscurity, in whatever diminished form, because of the very nature of the dancer's development, must still be expected; and the broad title of the Martha Graham composition, *Chronicle,* the various subtitles of the different movements, *Spectre-1914, Masque, Steps in the Street,* etc., set the tone. Nor does the choreography, however inventive, ever move seriously out of this particular general development. It is in the specific symbol that the ideology of the dance takes hold, conveys the unmistakable *opinion* to the audience. Sometimes, the symbol is completely obvious (the use of the gauze black flag in *Tragic Holiday—In Memoriam*); more often, however, the symbol is obscure to the mass.

And undoubtedly it is these same specific symbols that are more or less the springboards the dancer uses for the development of her choreography. *Spectre-1914* (the imperialist gesture) may or may not have been built against its red, white, and black décor, red, white, and black the colors of the imperialist Germany of 1914 and the colors of the imperialist Third Reich; but the décor became intrinsically a part of the choreography. *Masque,* the second of the two *Dances Before Catastrophe* (*Spectre-1914* the first) was definitely built around the fixed movements of the Spanish Pavanne; and the use of the Spanish Pavanne instead of perhaps a Morris dance which should have brought the English into the 1914 picture was certainly not an accident —and curiously draws the entire composition away from the specific imperialist entanglement of 1914-18 and generalizes the entire work to make room for the dancer's opinions on the Spanish front. Unquestionably the Pavanne base for *Masque* stems not from any general European situation but is a rather definite reaction to the specific current scene.

And where does the audience come in? Simply enough; if it is aware of the colors of the various national emblems; *Spectre-1914* with its red, white, and black décor becomes an anti-imperialist, if not anti-fascist statement. *Masque,* however, needs a dance student, and one fairly advanced to comprehend completely the dancer's meaning. The mass audience, it is to be taken for granted, knows little of the court forms of the sixteenth century, and must miss pretty much the dancer's intentions so far as the reference to the Spanish situation is concerned. Consider, too, that the mass audience must go through the additional step of realizing that the Pavanne with its religious overtones is a feudal hangover, dating back significantly to the conquistador Cortez, and must logically refer to the semi-medieval role of those in the camps of the insurgents; that the satirical treatment of the Pavanne must indicate the anti-insurgent, therefore anti-fascist sentiments of the dancer and therefore of her choreography. Obviously, this analyzing process is much too much to ask of a mass audience witnessing for the first time so swift a pattern as dance choreography must be.

And then there is the question of symbolism in solo and group figures. The simplest relationship to understand is that of leader and follower; there is little of that sort of phrasing in Martha Graham's work; her patterns are increasingly intricate. For example, most confusing in the new composition was the solo dancer in the *Masque* movement. What is the meaning of a central figure that alternately controls and is controlled by unpredictable group movements? Symbolically following the ideological development of the choreography, the solo figure is evidently the masque (title of the movement) of an order—social, economic, or political—which alternately controls or is controlled according to the necessities of imperialist dictates. The question is—just how much of this does the mass audience get? And if it cannot comprehend this particular movement, how much can it pick up of the ensuing movements, and how can it possibly understand the climactic *Prelude to Action* which sums up the dancer's ideological approach?

Soriano

The problem is not simple, but no problem involving the creative processes in dance, as in any art form, can ever be simple. *Chronicle* is a logically developed composition; it moves beautifully through brilliant choreography; there is a coherence in the work that is rare among the longer ballets of the modern school; and what the dancer has to say has meaning and significance—for the audience that has come with the art from its Dada cradle. But the greater mass audience is pretty well confused and uncertain. And that fraction of the established dance audience which has traveled less on the road toward a political and social awareness is no better off; it will understand the brilliant choreography, perhaps, but it will puzzle over titles, program notes, and so misconstrue the dancer's intentions that there will remain no clarified comprehension of the dancer's work, and for all purposes the dancer will have spoken into much of a void.

Evidently, a choice presents itself. One dances for the special coterie that understands the special language, knowing that the coterie must diminish till one finally dances for oneself; or one realizes subtlety is not the bloodstream of art, that reticence may well be carried to the point of a false refinement, that one must break completely with obfuscations, hyperbolas, and obscurity, and move out to the people. And moving out to the people does not mean, of course, to over-simplify, to make threadbare, to talk down to an audience; it means one must speak in terms that are understandable and immediately comprehensible.

Concerning Martha Graham, there is no dancer who has moved more convincedly and more convincingly in this direction; and her work has never faltered. Doris Humphrey still works in the more abstract patterns of the more abstract idea; Charles Weidman develops his pantomime for more direct contact; Tamiris tackles the more concrete theme. True, there is some time and distance still separating these artists from the mass audience, but in the light of their work as innovators and as the leading forces in this rapidly developing field, this season's *Momentum, With My Red Fires, Quest,* and certainly *Chronicle* are to be accepted as the most important studies in the modern dance.

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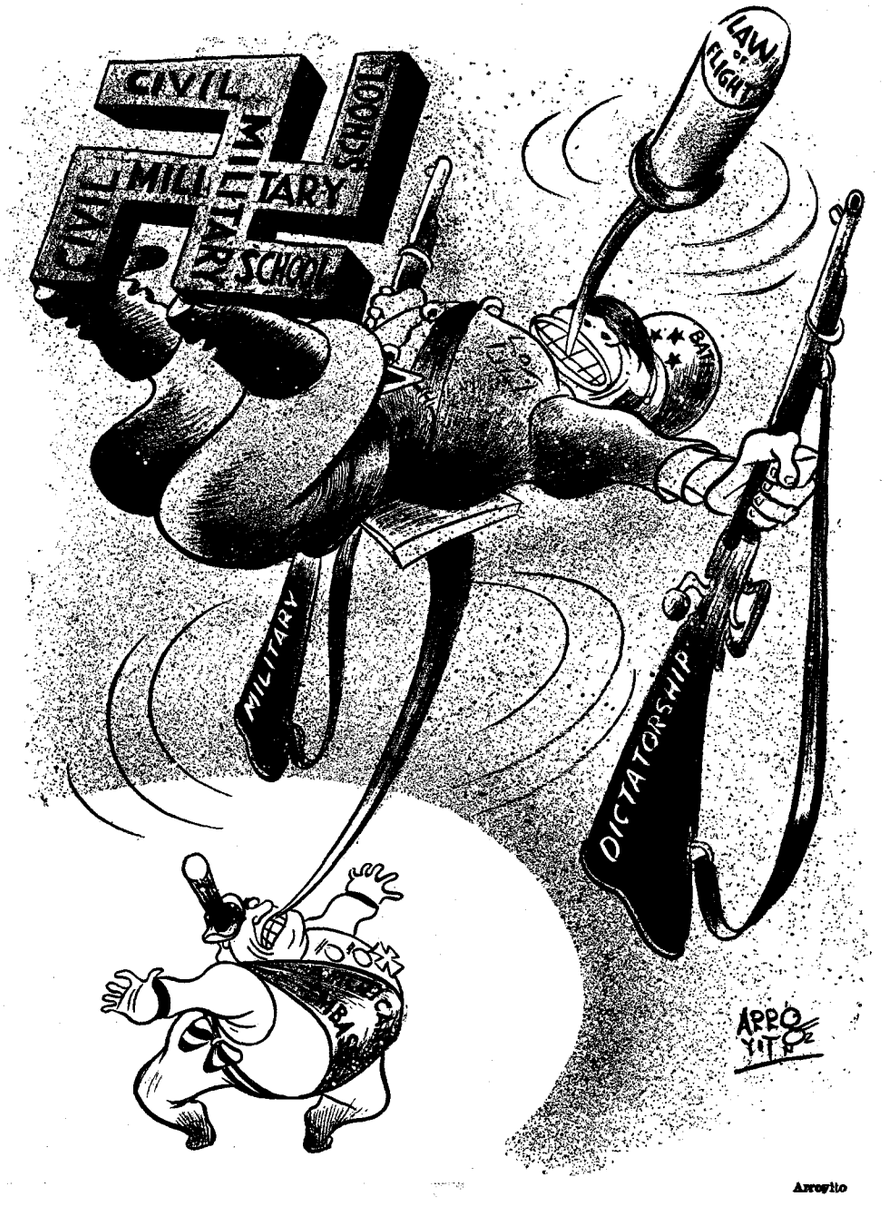
Cuba's Dictator

Batista's rise to his present eminence was made possible by a force which will one day make an end of his regime

By Juan Marinello



Arcayito

THE overthrow of the Gomez administration in Cuba in December has only confirmed what Cuban revolutionists already knew and publicly charged: a most arbitrary and bloody tyranny rules the island. It is no longer open to doubt that Col. Fulgencio Batista, chief of the Cuban army, possesses absolute political power; his will is equivalent to law. Gomez constituted an obstacle to this arbitrary will; therefore, he was removed even though Batista himself hoisted Gomez into power. Democratic forms continue to be maintained, but the man who now occupies the presidency, Dr. Federico Laredo Bru, an old and corrupt *politico,* is merely the tool of the Batista tyranny.

Batista, now so powerful as a result of the backing of American Ambassador Jefferson Caffery, emerged as an important public figure in a curious and objectively revolutionary manner. He was a "leftist" when, after the fall of the dictator Machado, in August 1933, the revolutionary temperature was high. To go places at that time, one had to fall in with the powerful and aggressive popular movement which overthrew Machado. During this movement, Batista, a mere sergeant, successfully deposed his former officers and rose to his present position of chief of the army, September 4, 1933. He came as a redeemer, but he was nothing but a vulgar climber, one of the many from which Hispano-America has suffered. Batista showed his reactionary hand with the fall of the Grau San Martin government in December 1933. In order to keep from falling with the government, he found allies among the old-line politicians, the cronies of Machado and Mendieta, formerly his enemies. He established close ties with the island capitalists. He offered his services to the sugar barons of the United States and to their embassy. While everybody expected him to go out with Grau San Martin, Batista was really the accomplice of those who overthrew President Grau San Martin.

His first job was to get control of the national treasury. Possession of the public moneys is essential to tyranny in a country in which imperialist capital has displaced native capital in agriculture, industry, and commerce. Whoever dispenses jobs in the government bureaucracy will automatically hold the real power. There are many thousands of Cubans who view a government job as the only solution to poverty. The recent crisis, which ended with the ousting of Gomez, had its origin in a struggle for control of the national budget. Gomez resisted Batista's efforts to get complete control of the treasury.

Batista counted upon the strength of his army and the subservience of the legislature in his conflict with Gomez. The representatives and senators who comprise the legislative power were hand-picked by Batista in the last election. In return, the House and Senate gave the dictator control over a third of the national budget after the last elections. But Batista was not satisfied.

In the present session of the legislature, Batista wrote a bill which taxed sugar production about $2,000,000 a year. This revenue, according to the law, would be handed over to the army, i. e., Batista, for the maintenance of primary schools under army control. The legislature passed the bill with indiscreet haste. President Gomez opposed the bill on the grounds that it really signified the complete militarization of the national income and the militarization of public instruction. Batista struck back at this "obstacle" by ordering "his" congress to impeach the president. And the hand-picked Congress obeyed.

What will Batista do with this new money? To remain in power, Batista has resorted to

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two methods: violence and demagogy. The Batista tyranny far exceeds that of the sanguinary Machado. Torture, assassination, prison are his normal stock in trade. This money will help to pay for the small army of police, *confidentes,* stool-pigeons, spies, and "military reserve."

It is in respect to his demagogy that Batista is employing novel (for Cuba) methods. The peculiarity of the present crisis is precisely here. In recent months, the "big boss" of Cuba has proclaimed himself the liberator of the workers and peasants and has pledged the army to the solution of all their problems. Batista declares that it will no longer be necessary to engage in the struggle between the possessors and the dispossessed.

Within the Cuban army, he has reproduced the organization of the Cuban civil government—an original Batista contribution to the science of statecraft. He has at general headquarters a department of labor, education, sanitation, and public works. These "departments" have restricted the scope and impeded the work of the corresponding legal ministries and departments. His latest maneuver was an effort to organize an army department of public education. While making it practically impossible for the University, the Institutes of Secondary Education, and the rest to function, he demagogically promises the creation of thousands of primary schools. The Batista schools would be taught by ignorant soldiers, not by qualified teachers, of whom there is a great reservoir of unemployed. The Batista method has been to saddle fascism on the country under cover of reforms.

This demagogy even plays around with the noble anti-imperialist sentiments of the Cuban people. It is necessary to appear to fight against Yankee finance capital to secure sympathy among the broad masses in Cuba. Batista has gone the length of organizing artificial demonstrations of soldiers and bureaucrats to hail his "program" of "national liberation of Cuba" through the streets of Havana. The new sugar tax is ostensibly a blow at the Yankee sugar companies. It would appear that the law will cut the profits of the imperialist corporations to pay for public education. Nothing could be more false.

Is it conceivable that Batista, dependent upon foreign capital and Ambassador Caffery for continuation of his cruel rule, will alienate those whose support he needs against the exploited and oppressed masses? Of course not. The companies have fully agreed to pay the new tax. They know that it will ultimately be saddled on the consuming public and the workers. They know that it is a pitifully small amount to pay as insurance against revolution. Every Cuban not sold to Batista and his foreign backers knows that civil liberties and better conditions in Cuba will be gained only by attacking the semi-feudal economy on which the Yankee sugar enterprises rest. A man like Batista, who has held back the Cuban revolution, deserves to be maintained in power even if it costs a few pennies. The $2,000,000 tax is no great strain on the imperialists.

It is to be expected that Dr. Federico Laredo Bru, Batista's new puppet president, will not stay long in office. He will probably be replaced by General Rafael Montalvo, an even more unscrupulous figure. With Montalvo in the presidency and Colonel Pedraza as chief of police, an intensified period of terror awaits the island. But this gloomy future will be shattered by the strong, freedom-loving heart which beats throughout the island. The Cuban people are inspired by one of the most powerful revolutionary impulses in the Americas and it will not be stilled for long.

Herb Kruckman

SEEING AMERICA FIRST

II—Escorting Strikebreakers

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READERS' FORUM

A corps of anti-fascist Irishmen—Social scientists and W.P.A.—Two letters on youth matters

● An Irish contingent to aid the Spanish republic has been formed and many volunteers are already on their way to the Spanish Front. This action on the part of the organizations comprising the united front in Ireland has the following objectives: (1) to demonstrate revolutionary Ireland's solidarity with the gallant Spanish workers and peasants in their fight against fascism and its allies; (2) to redeem Irish honor besmirched by the intervention of Irish fascism on the side of the rebels; (3) to aid revolutionary republicans and workers in Ireland to create a strong united labor-republican front against Irish fascism; (4) to establish bonds of kinship between the democracies of Ireland and Spain.

Frank Ryan, well-known national figure, is in charge of the contingent, and he has been recognized by the Spanish government as in command of the Irish units in Spain. He will also act as intermediary between Spain and Ireland, and will be assisted by such well-known republicans as Bill Scott and Frank Edwards. It is hoped that his presence will be of the greatest assistance in mobilizing Irish support for our comrades in the fight against fascism in Spain.

Members of the contingent already in Spain are men from Dublin, Belfast, and other cities. Arrangements are also being made to enable Irishmen in England and other countries to join the battalion.

It is a pity this news is receiving much less publicity in the American and world press than the activities of General O'Duffy's so-called Christian Front, which has gone to help Franco.

General O'Duffy, your readers should know, was police chief under the Cosgrave administration. His hostility against republicans, especially during the coercion period of 1931, made him an unpopular figure in Ireland. This reputation may partially explain O'Duffy's failure to maintain his fascist (blueshirt) organization. GERALD O'REILLY,
Secretary, Irish Republican Congress.

W.P.A. and Unemployment

● A city conference of social scientists will take place at the New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, N. Y., Sunday, January 17, at 2 p.m., to discuss an urgent public problem, unemployment in relation to the W. P. A.

The conference is called jointly by three organizations and by social-minded friends of these: the New York City Committee of Social Scientists, Local 453 of the American Federation of Teachers, and the City Projects Council of the Workers Alliance of New York.

Professional men and women in every field of science, education, literature, and art are cordially invited to attend.

BURRILL FREEDMAN, *Secretary.*

Fascism in Films

● The fascist film *Alcazar* is dead.

When the masses kick, they kick like a mule. This time they kicked a reactionary motion picture into the gutter.

20th-Century Fox announced this inevitably infamous document but ninety days ago. Hearst's gilded liar Knickerbocker was to "authenticate" the material. The public began to retch.

Spontaneously the liberal and radical press called for a mass protest. Dozens of organizations, representing millions of profitable dollars to the box-office, sent in blast after blast to the producer.

As in Spain itself, the issue was clear: it was democracy confronted by fascism, insulted and made angry by fascism.

Mr. Darryl Zanuck, 20th-Century Fox chief, is a stubborn capitalist. He said the public could go to hell. He was going to make the show anyway. He issued a fighting statement to the trade press. It was his money, wasn't it?

The great masses thought differently. They knew it was their money which creates Zanuck's money. The protests mounted in volume, in tone. Trade unions took interest. Trade unions the world over know what fascism means.

A giant roar from a giant union, the powerful confederation of Mexican workers, clinched the argument.

Zanuck pulled the writers from the story that afternoon.

The masses had won.

The masses had won a battle. The war is now on. The producers of Hollywood must be taught where their profits come from—must be taught to respect the people.

Other fascist films are planned. Hollywood's Columbia studios (Mr. Harry Cohn, if you care to write) also would like to present an Alcazar picture. Probably the same theme: "personal bravery," with "no sides taken." Paramount, likewise immune to the bravery of the Spanish people, announces a film called *The Last Train to Madrid,* undoubtedly one more "impartial" drama of the invasion.

Obviously, sleepless vigilance is necessary. This defense of the public's right to be protected against vicious anti-democratic ideas on celluloid, can only be conducted organizationally.

The organization has already been born, sired in this crisis. It needs your support. Inquire about the Film Patrons' Alliance. Stimulate its strengthening. See that your trade union, anti-war organization, anti-fascist body, affiliates with it—to condemn pictures insinuating fascist ideas, to support films with honest class emphasis.

Let Mr. Zanuck and the other producers know that the Film Patrons' Alliance is sharply and intelligently interested in his plans for the future.

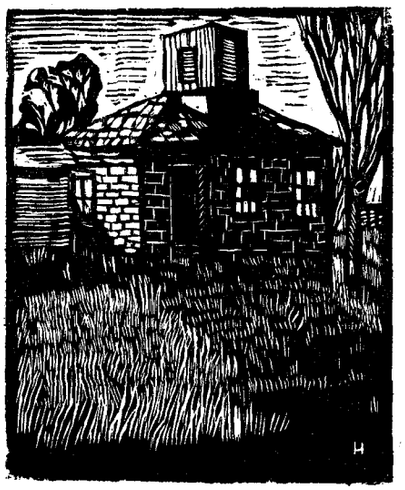
They are interested in our money. Let us demand that they respect our liberties, our blood-won institutions.

Hollywood, Cal. PETER BOONE.

Martha Graham and Intelligibility

● I wish to take exception to a dance review that Owen Burke wrote on Martha Graham.

His criticism on the whole suffered from wish-fulfillment on his part. All of us have also followed Miss Graham these many years and seemed to believe that we understood what she meant to convey in her dancing. But if Mr. Burke found *Chronicle* so clear, he seems to have been the only one in the audience who understands Miss Graham's non-committal movements.



H. A. Blumenstiel

Martha Graham's new piece suffered severely from understatement. She feared to say too much. She knew she was handling propaganda and therefore tried to make it as unpropagandistic as possible. The result was a confused and muddled statement of a vital theme.

Over a period of years, this artist has developed a revolutionary technique somewhat along the lines of Picasso. But today this same technique has reached the point where it hinders her in her dramatic expression.

The dance, unlike the other arts, has to strike hard and fast for the few minutes it appears before the audience. If it is equivocal and abstruse, it fails in the first principle of the theater arts.

Martha Graham's movement has already become too sublimated, too far removed from the ordinary associations that the human body in motion professes to mean. L. COOPER.

[Correspondent Cooper will be interested in "A Note on the Modern Dance," by Owen Burke, in this issue, in which some of the questions raised above are discussed.—THE EDITORS.]

Sportsmen Wanted

● The Young Communist League in New York is embarking upon a sports program. All types of sport activity for both boys and girls will be included. For this there is a great need of trained personnel: organizers, coaches, physical directors, recreation leaders. Athletes who have participated in organized athletics in college, high school, or as professionals are urged to offer their services.

A meeting to organize the apparatus to handle the activity has been called for January 14, 7:30 p.m., Room 207, 50 E. 13th St., New York City. Everyone interested is invited. Those who would like to obtain more information on the sport project can write to or call at our office, Room 518, 50 E. 13th St., N. Y. C.

STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,
Young Communist League.

Youth on the March

● We ask you to help us, through the medium of your magazine, to bring to the attention of your readers our Pilgrimage to Washington the weekend of February 19. This Pilgrimage will include 2000 or more young people from all parts of the country, delegates and sympathizers, who will present to their representatives and senators and to President Roosevelt petitions and pleas from their organizations to pass the American Youth Act. On Saturday, January 23, the American Youth Congress is holding a Pilgrimage Ball (Center Ball Room, 308 W. 59th Street) as a send-off and to raise money for the delegates to Washington. MAC MASTERMAN.

Terror in Tampa Again

● The reign of vigilanteism which some time ago gripped the city of Tampa, Fla., has found added strength in the support of the Tampa immigration officials. A campaign of intimidating foreign-born trade unionists with the threat of deportation, always a mighty weapon on the side of the "law and order" boys in American labor disputes, has been unleashed.

The first victim of this campaign of deportation terror has been Lorenzo Puentes, member of the Cigarmakers' International Union, who is being held for deportation to Cuba, charged with membership in the Communist Party.

His persecution both by the vigilantes and the immigration department is the result of the faith he placed in the existence of freedom of speech and belief in the United States.

ABNER GREEN.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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On the Home Front, and Beyond

AS we go to press, motorbuses from the South, day coaches from New England, Model-T Fords from the Great Plains are rushing to our nation's capital the shock troops in the great battle on our home front: the battle of the unemployed to wring from those who profit by our form of economy the means wherewith to provide food, clothing, and shelter for the victims of that economy. The particular skirmish at hand is the effort mobilized by the Workers' Alliance on a national scale to meet the emergency situation caused by the depletion of W.P.A. funds. The Alliance delegates, scheduled to gather in the nation's capital 3000 strong on January 15, demand immediate appropriation of $1,250,000,000 as an emergency fund for the coming five-month period. After preliminary requests for $500,000,000, then $650,000,000, the administration has finally asked for $790,000,000 to meet the situation. The Workers' Alliance stands pat on its larger demand, which is designed to afford a needed 20-percent increase in W.P.A. wage rates and to permit immediate care for 500,000 victims of the drought. The politicians are sitting up nights thinking how they can successfully counter the Alliance demands. Some, responding to pressure from their electorates, are ready to back them. Readers of the NEW MASSES are urged to act individually and in their organizations as soon as possible in bringing pressure to bear on senators and representatives to obtain their support of the Workers' Alliance demands.

One of the significant things about this national march on Washington is the fact that the Farm Holiday Association is officially participating. This is one of the important fruits of the unity which the unemployed organizations forged last year. It is the kind of consequence of unity which belies the reasoning which we have too often heard from certain sections of the Socialist Party leadership, which say, "We, even together, are but a puny handful. What's the point of unity at this time?" The point is that together the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. By the fact of forging unity the sections of the working-class movement can snowball support for their programs at a surprising rate. Another case in point is the American Youth Congress, which will go to Washington on a mass scale at the end of February in support of legislation for the American Youth Act, with such "respectable" organizations as the National Student Federation endorsing it. Endorsement by such influential bodies is usually possible only after the Left united front has been formed.

Permanent mass unemployment on the home front and threats of war and fascism on the international front are the order of the day. The menacing nature of these threats cannot be overestimated. Members of the Socialist Party, along with Communists, trade unionists, professionals, and middle-class folk everywhere must adopt the course taken by the youth and the unemployed. The Left united front is the core around which can speedily be mustered an invincible defense of living standards, peace, and freedom. Start today to build it!

Radio Censorship

OWEN D. YOUNG, founder of the Radio Corporation of America and chairman of N.B.C.'s advisory board, once defended radio censorship as follows: "Freedom of speech for the man whose voice can be heard a few hundred feet is one thing. Freedom of speech for the man whose voice can be heard around the world is another. . . . The preservation of free speech now depends upon the exercise of a wise discretion by him who undertakes to speak."

To progressives, Mr. Young's premise scarcely justifies his conclusion. On the contrary, the very importance of radio as a means of communication makes censorship all the more dangerous to the liberties of the people. Radio is today the leading medium for affecting public opinion. It is a vast monopoly of public entertainment, opinion, and education. And this instrument for the transmission of ideas is subject to censorship by the station managers and by the Federal Communications Commission.

Just how this censorship works out is shown is a lucid study of actual cases prepared for the American Civil Liberties Union by Minna F. Kassner and Lucien Zacharoff and issued in a pamphlet called *Radio Is Censored*. Victims of this censorship include radicals, liberals, minority political parties, trade unions, doctors seeking to warn the public against syphilis, and opponents of lynching. Progressive ideas are kept off the air either in the name of "good taste" or on the ground that they are "too controversial"—but the point is that they are kept off. Censorship technique is simple. The radio station may refuse to sell time. It may break contracts to broadcast. It demands copies of speeches in advance and retains the right to cut. It can drown out or cut off a speaker in the middle of a program. It can relegate speakers to early morning hours when few people listen in.

To counteract these and other abuses, Representative Byron Scott of California introduced in the 1936 Congress a series of bills providing: (1) that each radio station as a condition of its license set aside a regular period "at desirable times of the day and evening for uncensored discussion on a non-profit basis of public, social, political, and economic problems and for educational purposes"; (2) that it be mandatory for every station presenting a controversial issue to give a hearing to at least one opposing view; (3) that stations, but not speakers, be free of legal liability for remarks on such programs; (4) that stations be compelled to keep accurate and public records of all applications for time on the air, indicating which are granted and which refused.

We hope that such bills will be introduced into the Congress and that an effective fight will be made by liberal and radical spokesmen to have them passed.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

A Trotskyite version of the Moscow trials—Marx and Engels—Thumbing your way around

THE author of the pamphlet under review* is a professional Trotskyite and editor of Trotsky's works. He was not present at the trial of Zinoviev and his associates held in Moscow last August. Both these circumstances must be taken into consideration, for the author is not merely partisan but his absence from the August trial deprives him of any special authority on the subject; he admittedly has no new evidence to support his views. He arrives at his conclusions upon the basis of published material available to all of us and which we are all equally at liberty to examine.

Strictly speaking, however, neither absence from the trial nor participation in Trotsky's activities necessarily robs arguments of their force and cogency. These should be examined on their own merits. However, logic demands that they be examined not in a void but in comparison with the evidence brought out at the Moscow trial.

The author of the pamphlet charges that the trial was a "frame-up." Faced with the confessions of the defendants, he dismisses them as the obedient mouthing of roles assigned to each of the accused by the authorities. But how could strong, intelligent, and courageous men be brought to such abject straits? His answer is that their morale was sapped by prolonged and refined torture. This argument of force is then supplemented with another argument: the accused confessed because they were promised their lives. But why was this whole farce enacted? To wipe out the leaders of the Old Bolsheviks and to discredit Trotsky in the eyes of the world proletariat. What proof is there for these grave assertions? No proof. What arguments from *analysis* are submitted? Two contradictory arguments: on the one hand, the evidence brought out at the Moscow trial was too pat to be credible; on the other, there were contradictions—and that also makes it incredible.

Setting aside the abuse which the pamphlet heaps upon the Soviet Union and its leaders, the questions under consideration reduce themselves to two. Did the defendants have a fair trial? Were they guilty?

The charge against them was their responsibility for the murder of Kirov. In countries concededly regarded as democratic, such as the United States, the judicial process of evidence and conviction is clear enough. A defendant may be convicted if he merely pleads guilty to the charge against him. If, in addition, a signed confession is read into evidence, and if the defendant admits that he made that confession voluntarily, no one would question the conviction. And if, further still, the defendant turned state's evidence and confessed not merely before the trial but testified fully to his guilt at the trial itself, then, according to American court procedure, his guilt would be established beyond the shadow of a doubt. Yet these are precisely the stages through which the sixteen men at the Moscow trial went. They pleaded guilty, they made confessions before the trial, they did not claim that the confessions were extorted, and they reaffirmed and amplified their confessions at an open trial. Under these circumstances, is there a court in the world which could have rendered any other verdict but guilty?

Critics of the trial, however, insist that the conspirators should have been proven guilty by incriminating documents and by unimpeachable witnesses. To anyone familiar with crime and criminals, indeed to anyone with a grain of common sense, this is a strange requirement. Conspirators do not sign documents proving themselves guilty of crime; nor do they entrust their plots to "unimpeachable" outsiders.

Moreover, no court is bound to assume that a defendant who testifies against himself is either insane or a victim of duress. The sixteen men on trial last August appeared to all observers to be perfectly sane, and they did not say they had been under duress. On the contrary, with many foreign correspondents looking on, ready to report to the world any sign or admission of duress, the defendants repeated and amplified their confessions. Had there been such tortures as the pamphlet contends there were, symptoms of it would surely have been evident to the correspondents, who were not inclined to use whitewash.

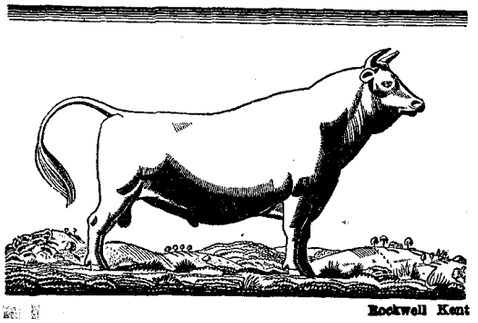
This point leads us to a further consideration. In any conceivable form of jurisprudence, the ascertainment of the truth of any charge must depend upon the weighing of many impalpable factors at the trial itself. Not the least of such factors is the behavior of the defendants. The entire world press published reports of the trial by correspondents who witnessed it. The opinion was *uniform* that the defendants were under no apparent restraint or duress in testifying to their guilt. On the contrary, the pamphlet tries to create an untenable argument out of the very unrestained "volubility" of the defendants.

For us to believe that the defendants made false confessions on the promise of immunity requires us also to believe that these men were not only completely demoralized but also unutterably stupid. If, as the critics say, the Soviet authorities are vindictive and unscrupulous men who would resort to any means to get rid of their former political rivals, then nobody would have been better aware of this than Zinoviev and his associates. The defendants were at one time on the most intimate terms with the authorities; they knew the mentality of those who directed the case against them. They, of all people in the world, would best have known a false promise from that source when they saw one, and would have refused to make untrue confessions.

How the confessions were allegedly obtained is described in the pamphlet not from knowledge or logic, but by reference to the Menshevik trial of 1931. Here it is worth noting that the pamphlet, in order to clear the defendants of the crimes to which they confessed, is compelled to discredit not only the August trial but other Soviet trials not involving their groups at all. Yet the argument adduced from the Menshevik trial defeats itself. The author of this pamphlet argues that the Menshevik Sukhanov was induced to accuse himself of crimes on the G.P.U.'s promise of immunity. Then "the accused kept his promise, whereas the G.P.U. violated its pledge." If this alleged "fact" is known to the Trotskyites in New York, it would certainly have been known to Kamenev and Zinoviev in Moscow. If it actually were a fact, it would surely have deterred these men from accepting any false promises of immunity.

If this trial was a farce, what a chance the G.P.U. took! If a single one of the sixteen men had refused to play the part alleged to have been assigned, he could have wrecked the whole business. It is incredible that if the accused were innocent, at least *one* of them would not have retained enough sanity to see that everything was lost, and enough moral fiber to tell the truth. Dimitroff, out of the strength of his innocence, stood up at the Reichstag fire trial, denied the charges against him, denounced his prosecutors. If Zinoviev and his associates were innocent, they had ample opportunity to follow Dimitroff's example and to discredit the trial. The world was looking on; foreign correspondents were present; there was no restraint or duress in the court room. What a platform from which to proclaim to the world that a vile farce was being enacted, that Stalin had engineered this conspiracy for judicial murder, that the accused had been promised life if they would only involve Trotsky in Kirov's assassination.

If the defendants had any hope that their lives would be spared, surely that hope was gone by the time Prosecutor Vishinsky finished his powerful last speech. The defendants had their say *after* that speech; they addressed the court and even the public in the court room



Rockwell Kent

*BEHIND THE MOSCOW TRIAL, *by Max Schachtman. New York. The Pioneer Press.*

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fully and freely. Yet not *one* of them withdrew his confession or cast doubts upon the validity of the trial; not one of them said, "The prosecutor's demand for the death penalty is a violation of the pledge made to us." From all this only one conclusion is possible: the defendants confessed their guilt over and over again simply because they actually were guilty. No other conclusion stands the test of reason.

The pamphlet under review makes a considerable point of the discrepancies as to the dates when the various conspiratorial centers functioned and as to who the leaders were. It would be remarkable indeed if the testimony of the various defendants did not differ in some respects. If all the sixteen men on trial had told identical stories the critics would have had a far better case, for every jurist knows that only fabricated testimony worked out in collusion dovetails perfectly. All genuine testimony shows discrepancies when several witnesses are involved. The experience of the law courts and the investigations of psychology have shown that no two men witnessing the same series of events can remember them identically, and that even no individual remembers anything perfectly.

In connection with this pamphlet, it is worth noting Trotsky's own views of the trial as published recently in the New York *Times*. His arguments need only to be stripped of their rhetoric for their weakness to emerge. Thus, he contends that Kamenev had lost his morale in 1928 and capitulated. He was too demoralized at the trial to assert his innocence —but just not sufficiently demoralized to plot terror. Zinoviev was a political corpse—but just an important enough political corpse to require killing off by a "frame-up." Bakayev could falsely swear his guilt and could falsely implicate his associates in the crime—but he could not plot treason.

The more one examines the psychological arguments against the trial, the more one is compelled to dismiss them as irrelevant. In the first place, if it is absurd to assume that oppositionists who had been close to Lenin and call themselves Marxists could plan the murder of Kirov, it is equally absurd to assume that government officials who also had been close to Lenin and also call themselves Marxists could plan the judicial murder of the defendants. In the second place, if psychological motivation is to play a role in determining the validity of the trial, then the pamphlet under review makes it abundantly clear that the defendants had far stronger motives for plotting terror than the Soviet leaders had for plotting a frame-up. The author describes "Stalin and his clique" as absolute masters of the Soviet Union; they have boundless autocratic power to do as they please. Stalin, particularly, has everything his own way. His opponents pay him the extraordinary tribute of exempting him from all the laws of history. Here is a man who, as distinguished from Cæsar, Napoleon, Cromwell, and Lenin can alter a social system at his personal whim. Surely, such a man would have little motive to persecute innocent critics; he would feel secure in his omnipotence. The defendants, on the other hand, are described as victims of a prolonged, meaningless, and incredibly vindictive persecution. Stalin's vengeance, we are told, has rendered these men "politically disemboweled, demoralized, most of them broken physically and all of them morally." Surely, such men would have far stronger motives for revenge and would be far more likely to plan murder. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to disregard the psychological motives of both sides and assume the normal view that, whatever the character of the accused may have been at the time of the trial, they would not have confessed to crimes unless they had committed them.

Blind Etching by Caroline Durieux

We in this country, distant from the trial, unfamiliar with the individuals involved, are faced with two versions. One says the trial was fair; the other says it was a frame-up. We are left with a choice between what common sense accepts as *fact,* and what a will to believe makes of *inference.* Confession in open court in the presence of many foreign observers is a fact. The notion that the trial was a frame-up is based on surmise, conjecture, suspicion, speculation, and fantasy. It is not a fact but a hypothesis, and a hypothesis which has no real evidence to support it. It is said, of course, that *possibly* there was a frame-up, but when we examine this possibility, we find that it has no basis in the *facts.*

NATHAN FRANKEL.

From the Masters

SELECTED WRITINGS, *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. International Publishers.* $2.25.

IN a recent book, the philosopher George Santayana deigned to take notice of Marxism: "In my youth I tried to read Marx, but when I read that labor determines value and price and that therefore the less skilled the worker the more valuable his product, I stopped then and there forever." It is symptomatic of the pervasive and arrogant ignorance among American intellectuals in our universities regarding the most elementary propositions of Marxism that so influential and learned a writer can appear in public with so clumsy a distortion without a sense of shame. In an attack upon a fellow philosopher, intellectual integrity, or, at the very least, a feeling for the security of his own position, should have compelled Santayana to get clear in his own mind the arguments of his opponent.

For it is one of the cornerstones of Marx's political economy that the *opposite* of Santayana's statement is true—that it is neither the labor-time of the most skilled nor the least skilled that determines value and conditions price, but that these are functions of the *average socially necessary* labor-time.

Such examples of official obscurantism can be multiplied indefinitely. They are the hallmark of most university and journalistic thinking today. The reader is familiar, undoubtedly, with the galling myth, so sedulously fostered in a kind of covert agreement by all hacks big and small, that Marx's writings are "dull" and "long-winded," that they are the abstruse metaphysical abstractions of a crazed Hegelian. (This vulgarity appeared recently in the New York *Times* under the signature of a Mr. T. Florinsky—at present teaching at Columbia University and late of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg). The truth is, of course, that Marx's and Engels's writings are beautiful in their precision, wit, passion, and lucidity. For sheer *literary* power, for example, certain chapters in *Capital* or *The Civil War in France,* to instance only a few of innumerable possible examples, are quite matchless, and, by comparison, make all accepted classics of historical writing seem lifeless and stiflingly restricted in range.

A writer like Mr. Henry Hazlitt of the New York *Times* and the *Yale Review* considers himself devastating when he utters cute cracks about something he calls "economic determinism," with the implication that this philosophy, whatever it may mean, is synonymous with Marxism. Will gentry like these vow by something that is truly sacred to them (say, a guaranteed mortgage that yields a nice rate of interest) that they will do themselves the honor and their readers the service of *reading* ("If people could only read," Marx once declared in wry despair) such a selected compilation of Marx's and Engels's writings as now appears in this first of a two-volume edition?

Will they dare to quote in their reviews such passages as these:

> According to the materialistic conception the determining element in history is *ultimately* the production and reproduction of real life. More than this Marx and I never asserted. If therefore somebody twists it into the statement that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract, and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutions

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established by the victorious class after a successful battle, forms of law, etc.—and then, even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants; political, legal, philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma—also exercise their influence upon the course of historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*. There is an interaction of all these elements, in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, things and events whose inner connection is so remote or so impossible to prove that we regard it as absent and can neglect it) the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. (Page 381.)

Against this rich clarity what have the New York *Times* and the *Yale Review* to offer but a motley and shallow eclecticism which in the end reveals nothing but their own helplessness in the face of historic events?

Popularization of Marx's and Engels's works is, of course, valuable and necessary, and requires a talent for thoroughness that is not at all common. But this cannot replace the liberating effect of an immersion in the original writings of these revolutionary geniuses, and it is certainly one of the most beneficial results that we can hope for from the publication of these compiled volumes that they will make it easier for students and general readers to read *in their entirety* these groundworks of revolutionary theory.

These writings need to be read again and again, as Lenin used to read them, not because their clarity does not make its immediate mark, but because they are so rich in implication. For example, this passage:

I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development established in these spheres also (philosophy and literature), but it comes to pass that it is established *within conditions imposed by the particular sphere itself:* in philosophy, for instance, through the operation of economic influences (which again act generally under political, etc., disguises) upon the existing material handed by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing absolutely new, *but* it determines the way in which *the existing material of thought is altered and further developed,* and that, too, indirectly for the most part, for it is the political, legal, and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy.

Or consider this remark: "This side of the matter [that is, the specific development within 'the particular sphere itself'] we have all, I think, neglected more than it deserves. It is the old story: *form is always at first neglected for content.*"

Every word here has reverberations which crystallize for us in our present cultural struggles in America. Have we not in such passages at once a surpassing reply to the intellectual monasticism by which the bourgeoisie conceals the material content of its thought, and a key to a more supple probing of contemporary culture than we have yet mastered? The meaning of freedom, the possibility of universality, the uncovering of hidden energies in the human spirit now only half-guessed at, the enormous ranging of the human mind no longer at war with but nourished by the endless tumult of reality, are wonderfully sounded in these writings which have, at the same time, the illusionless rigor of science.

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Manifesto; Wage-Labor and Capital; Value, Price, and Profit; Feuerbach; Socialism Utopian and Scientific, essays by Lenin on Marx, Engels's prefaces to *Capital,* Stalin's pithy remarks on Marxism to the First American Delegation, and excerpts from the Marx-Engels correspondence, makes us eager for the second, which will contain the historical writings. Welcoming this new collection, is it not a good time to inquire once more when we are going to get authoritative editions in English of such classics as *Die Deutsche Ideologie, Die Heilige Familie, Natur und Dialektik,* and Marx's critique of Hegel's philosophy of law, the *Theorien über den Mehrwert,* let alone the complete correspondence, *Herr Vogt,* the articles in *Die Neue Zeit,* etc. The publication of these works would have an immediate effect on American intellectual life, and they would sweep into a deserved oblivion some of the more pretentious of the recent hybrid Marxist-pragmatists who can flourish only in the absence of these basic documents of revolutionary theory.

MILTON HOWARD.

Thumbs Down

THE STREET OF THE FISHING CAT, *by Jolán Földes. Farrar & Rinehart.* $2.50.

THIS novel by a Hungarian woman has been awarded the All-Nations Prize, amounting to the healthy sum of $19,000. Although the book has no positive social content whatever, its selection by the International Committee (American member: Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch) may be taken as a back-handed tribute to the prestige of the authentic left-wing novel; a tribute and also perhaps—so help us—a rebuke. The tribute is plainly conveyed in the fact that the materials of the book are proletarian. The rebuke, then, would lie in the unorthodox treatment given those materials.

The plot has promise. It deals with a worker-family in exile from Hungary; their struggles to make a life for themselves in a Paris charged with post-war hostilities and crowded with hungry refugees of every nationality and political complexion. Given such a situation the question would seem to be whether the Barabás youngsters will become class-conscious under the hardships and the clash of social opinion that confront them, or whether they will emerge at last as spotless little bourgeois.

However, no such dilemma develops. Miss Földes is so indifferent to the class struggle that she won't even admit it as a temptation to her characters. She liquidates it by the humiliating device of putting it in front of you, obviously and deliberately, and then inviting you to ignore it. Accordingly, two of the young Barabáses shoulder their pretty, sunny, insensitive way through poverty, politics, and heartburn to success and to reconciliation with the French who have snubbed them. Jani becomes an engineer with his face turned toward the land of opportunity, Africa. Klari, having learned to move about "with the perfect grace of a French hostess," marries a Frenchman. The less fortunate Anna falls victim to the sad but after all thoroughly enjoyable frustrations of expatriation.

As for Miss Földes's gallery of elder exiles, each of them plainly tagged with his particular political affiliation—

> Here they are living, fugitives, their life but a wingless semblance of the life for which they had been born. Every year the construction of another empire collapses around them, and buries a few thousand or a few hundred thousand, buries them and condemns them to this shadowy form of death-in-life existence. . . . In the meantime their greatest concern is whether or not Anna has taken a liking to the long-legged German.

Exile, you understand, has softened their old partisan ferocity. Cathrina, the Finnish Communist (who is lame), hobbles around making matches among the young, accompanied everywhere by the endearing knock-knock of her brace of canes; while Liiv, the morose Lithuanian Socialist, has the curious fate of succeeding in the world in spite of himself. Amusing idea! Topsy turvy world! In short, they are just such a lovable band of ex-revolutionists as some nervous member of the ruling class might hope to find at the bottom of his garden.

In all this there is, of course, no malice on Miss Földes's part. It is only, as Mr. Krutch explains on the jacket, that she "is interested in the human rather than the political value of her story." Does "human" mean impotent?

F. W. DUPEE.

Thumbs Up

THE GLITTERING CENTURY, *by Phillips Russell. Scribners.* $3.50.

HERE is a bird's-eye view of eighteenth-century Europe and America: the death of aristocracy, the rise of industrialism, the French Revolution, and our own particular rumpus. More than a simple political panorama, it is a complex, vivid, very readable cinematic presentation of eighteenth-century life in all its aspects.

It seems the eighteenth-century folk, both aristocratic and rising bourgeois, were rather a lively crowd. Defoe wrote about it in *The Review,* although college teachers still prefer to quote the politer *Tatler* and *Spectator,* which said less about moral and political degeneration. It was during this period of the good Queen Anne that Swift wrote about the Yahoos in *Gulliver's Travels* and Hogarth put them in unforgettable cartoons. Anyway, Phillips Russell gives us evidence that this jolly folk were so corrupt they could give cards and spades to our own high livers and lovers. You can imagine that all this makes rather Winchellish reading.

But there is always the danger that in history highly spiced, there is often less history. While Phillips Russell's account is enlivened enough to give us intimate scenes of "Boudoir rule," it must be noted that often it does so at the expense of more fundamental issues.

I advise that you take this book with that one reservation. But if you can afford it, you'll find *The Glittering Century* a very

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worth-while, imaginative picture of the first hundred years of the rising bourgeoisie which, contrary to current wise-crack, was by no means the hardest.

What should be of particular interest to our intelligentsia is the very intimate way in which Russell presents the writers, the literature, artists, and other cultural aspects of the day as warp and woof of all eighteenth-century life. There is no question here of art and propaganda, is it or isn't it. The bourgeois "engineers of the soul" spoke for the rising industrialism and the hell with the fuzzy eighteenth-century Union League Club aristocracy. Addison, Pope, Defoe, Swift, and Hogarth; Voltaire, Diderot, and other eighteenth-century New Deal writers, artists, and writer-artist-politicians were frankly in a class struggle and they were not being bothered about a Joe Wood Krutchian finesse. In this particular feature of the book one will happily find Phillips Russell not the university professor of English (North Carolina) but essentially the writer with an honest feeling for literature.

Of special interest are the literary portraits of the French fourteenth and fifteenth Louis; the Russian Peter the First and Catherine the Great; the German Frederick and the Philadelphia Ben Franklin; and all the eighteenth-century Englishmen, with Swedes and Dutchmen to complete the picture. To the author's credit is the fact that there is always a systematic presentation of the fundamental struggle of the land-owning aristocracy and the new industrialism on the make. But there is also too little of what a royal rooking the working class and peasantry suffered.

The author concludes that following the glittering eighteenth century "America did not walk upon the world stage again until 1898 in the Spanish war, and more emphatically in 1917 when it entered the World War, thus uniting two hemispheres in a single convulsive struggle that signalled the approaching birth of a totally new arrangement of human strata." Quite right. As more than rumored there is a new and final struggle in the making in this no less glittering twentieth century with the rising working class taking issue with the industrialists who are historically somewhat shopworn now.

As a whole, Phillips Russell gives us the eighteenth century with perhaps a bit more glitter than depth. It is, however, a readable, thumbs-up book. WALT CARMON.

Anodyne

GIVE US THIS DAY, *by Louis Zara. Bobbs-Merrill Co.* $2.50.

THERE is some reason to believe that the author intended this novel to be a serious portrayal of middle-class life. He deals with serious matters: greed, fraud, brutality, the disintegration of the family, the ugliness of bourgeois sex conventions, strikes, the hardships of the depression. He would seem to be troubled by the contradictions and moral disorder of the contemporary scene; and his interest in economics suggests at least that he is

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trying to keep up with the times. Yet he presents his problems in terms so superficial that it is difficult not to question his sincerity. The theme to which he hitches his social criticism—i.e., that honesty is a rare virtue and *not apt to bring success—is innocuous* enough in his hands; and his gently disarming pessimism sufficiently neutralizes any suggestion that the social order could be improved.

A good word might be said for the pleasant rendering of surface detail, for the well-realized characterization of Thomas Brabant, and for the fluent, if somewhat monotonous and redundant style. But on the whole the novel is flatulent. The course of events hinges on chance factors gratuitously propped by the notion that misfortune accrues to sin, and on shoddy characterization. Zara would like us to believe that his baker-hero Charles is an inquiring, sensitive man, something of a philosopher; but it apparently proved easier to have him act the part of an honest nincompoop. Charles's stupidity permits a precipitate marriage with a host of pseudo-tragic consequences, and an undesired and ruinous partnership; it permits Charles to be an unwitting scab; it permits his pathetic death. The two other characters who actuate the plot, Cecilia and Wulf, are not convincingly motivated in their more crucial actions. Such episodes as Caroline's young-girl passion for Charles, and Cecilia's infatuation with the musician, amount to little more than sentimental padding.

Zara's unwillingness or incompetence to handle important issues is evident whenever an important issue arises. The World War is ignored as much as possible; it does not affect the "sensitive" Charles. A bread strike is ended by a deception, and everyone is satisfied. A fatalistic attitude suffices for the interpretation of financial crises. A prophetic dream takes the place of a factual recognition of the coming of the present depression. Charles loses his bakery and becomes a relief client only because of the perverse ill-will of his partner. When a relief bakery is set up and closed on protest, Zara leaves the naïve impression that the fault is as much with labor as with capital.

In sum, the book is one more anodyne for the bourgeois conscience.

KATHERINE ELLIS.

Brief Reviews

SAINT JOAN OF ARC, *by V. Sackville West. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $3.

Accurate in regard to its data, "modern" in an older manner in its application of psychology, physiology, and other scientific guides, yet resorting to mysticism finally to explain what, in part at least, can be explained by placing Joan in her actual relationship—an embryonic nationalist and Protestant caught between the church and feudalism. The writing is lively and, within its limitations, the book is informative.

SALAVIN, *by George Duhamel, G. P. Putnam's Sons.* $2.75.

Salavin is a study in introversion and inferiority. Representing himself to himself as a man without courage, talent, or virtue but unable to endure this image, Salavin makes unending attempts to play ambitious rôles, the self-sacrificing friend, the lover, the revolutionist, the saint—each a failure. These adventures in dodging reality Duhamel narrates with the precision of a scientist and the intuitive sympathy of an artist. Nevertheless, Salavin's reality is like that of a figure in a bad dream. The social side of this patient's case history is left blank, which makes the diagnosis only half complete. Duhamel's cure is spiritual regeneration, a prescription already tried in several of Salavin's rôles and found useless. M. M.

A SKEPTIC IN THE HOLY LAND, *by Fulton Oursler. Farrar & Rinehart.* $2.

It would be hard to find a more vulgar and insensitive book than this dull chronicle of his ten weeks' tour in the holy land by Macfadden's chief editor.

CHINATOWN INSIDE OUT, *by Leong Gor Yun. Illustrated. Barrows Mussey, Inc.* $3.

There is a certain glamor in debunking glamor which adds a special spice to this book. Mr. Leong's debunking is sensitive and intelligent, not a reverse form of exploitation. His debunked Chinatown is merely stripped to its humanity and presented in its unromantic social and economic realities.

TRADITION, *by George F. Hummel. Coward McCann.* $2.50.

Mr. Hummel's insights into the social and economic determinants of the life he pictures in a Long Island village through three generations, are sharp and effective. The action however is somewhat slow-paced.

A CALL TO ARMS, *by Geoffrey Trease. International Publishers.* 85c.

Children's books from a working-class viewpoint are still almost a rarity. Geoffrey Trease has written some of the best thus far produced, notably *Bows Against the Barons* and *Comrades for the Charter.* His latest, however, falls a little below his standard, though it is exciting and a refreshing change from the ordinary type of historical romance for youngsters.

Two small South American nations, incited by agents of English munitions-makers, go to war. Young patriots and young revolutionaries, uniting at last on the revolutionary battlefield, discover there a new meaning for patriotism. The purpose of the story is to show in its most simple elements the capitalist and imperialist forces that promote war on the one hand — and the natural, inevitable role that the working class must play to bring an end to war and to war makers, to create, out of the chaos of capitalist war, a Socialist order.

There is here rather too much for a young mind to cover; a little too much political vocabulary and politically motivated action, and not enough care to set it all within the framework of child consciousness and child experience. For this reason, vivid as the story is, it does not serve as successfully as the preceding books to awaken class consciousness in the young reader. HELEN BERLIN.

★

Recently Recommended Books

The Crisis in the Socialist Party, by William Z. Foster. Workers Library Publishers. 5c.

Landlord and Peasant in China, by Chen Han-Seng. International. $2.

Biology and Human Behavior, by Mark Graubard. Tomorrow. $2.50.

Nursery School and Parent Education in Soviet Russia, by Vera Fediaevsky and Patty Smith Hill. Dutton. $2.50.

Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda, by John C. Miller. Little, Brown. $4.

The Theory and Practice of Socialism, by John Strachey. Random House. $3.

Art and Society: A Marxist Analysis, by George Plekhanov, with an introduction by Granville Hicks. Critics' Group. Cloth $1; paper 35c.

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"The Eternal Road," "High Tor," and ideology—Garbo and James Cagney—More Angna Enters

NOW that the Eternal Postponement has become *The Eternal Road,* the mystery of the delays is clarified. We were repeatedly told it has been always a question of money—$500,000, to be exact. Now we know whence the money for this stupendous spectacle has come. No anti-Semite can say that in this Jewish propaganda there is an ounce of Moscow gold. On the contrary, there is evidence of financial support from the Vatican and John D. Rockefeller, Sr., as well as from the Warburgs. I have heard it rumored that on Monday nights the Episcopalians will come to see Franz Werfel's play, Orthodox Jews Friday evenings, and the Irish Catholics on Saturday night.

The Eternal Road, as you may have guessed, is the best propaganda on Broadway for the maintenance of the *status quo.* Its thesis, in brief, is: when threatened with death and impoverishment, remember the past wherein others died and were impoverished and so have courage to die and be impoverished again. If they stood it, so can you. Persecution becomes a virtue. Specifically, the ghetto of a town in eastern Europe is threatened with a pogrom and all the Jews crowd into the synagogue for mutual protection, including the wealthy who have not attended services regularly and the estranged who tried assimilation. The rabbi evokes courage and detracts their fears by reading from the Bible. These stories of Abraham, Jacob, and Rachel, of Joseph, Moses, Ruth, Saul, David, and Solomon form the pageantry of the evening, some scenes of which are exceptionally beautiful. This beauty, especially the celestial choir, is precisely the opiate. And our attention to it confuses the issues. Fears of pogroms never kept all Israel united. Pogroms drove some Jews back to the synagogue, but they also drove others, desiring to escape, into the camp of the pogrom-makers, as witnessed today by the "Honorary Aryans" in Germany and the Jewish Liberty Leaguers in this country. And also today the fear of pogroms is driving many Jews to align themselves with the gentile victims of pogroms, the workers who are enslaved by reaction and the middle class who are liquidated by the economics of fascism. *The Eternal Road* is set in the Middle Ages, but its message is meant to apply to us. The besieged Jews petition the Tyrant, who is neither "friend or foe," and he permits them to depart from his country, leaving behind what goods they can't carry. And so today the Zionists petition Hitler. The answer of the Middle Ages is to adjust one's self to anti-Semitism. This adjustment means a return to the world of the rabbi and the money-lender, to the economy and the ideology which play their part in breeding race hate. *The Eternal Road* is the road back, the eternal treadmill of insecurity and hatred. This road back may be flattering to the egos of harassed Jews (identification with Abraham and his sacrifice, etc.) but it does not mend broken heads or fill emptied purses. The Tyrant in the eastern-European town had used his Jews as sponges on his populace (that's why his forefathers invited them into Poland), and when the populace yelled too loud he threw them, with the aid of the church, the empty sponges. Accept that economy? The next country down the road has it. The Jewish Cynic (Sam Jaffe), like Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost,* turns out to be the hero of *The Eternal Road;* he didn't go to Palestine (Arab pogroms).

The production is long and at times tedious. The music of Kurt Weill is disappointing and monotonous. The dancing is good. Norman Bel Geddes did an exceptional job which honors his career. ROBERT GESSNER.

EVER SINCE the final curtain came down on *High Tor,* Grandpa has been hefting his favorite hickory switch, wondering whether to give Maxwell Anderson a good hiding or whether an old-fashioned heart-to-heart talk wouldn't be more to the purpose. Grandpa is hopping mad at Max, because Max is old enough to know better. He says if Max is old enough to have read Thoreau's *Walden,* Washington Irving's *Tales,* Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream,* the plays of Pirandello, and some of the latter-day genial "eclectic" pessimist philosophers (which Grandpa says he must have read, to be able to write *High Tor*), then Grandpa feels that Max is also old enough to have read another well-known writer who said that you can fool some of the people some of the time, all of the people some of the time, but not all of the people all of the time.

Of course Grandpa is just a crusty old crank of a Marxist, Max probably thinks, and a lot of things he might complain about because they weren't out of the gospel, most other people would never notice. Grandpa is not sure that Max feels that way about it, but he has an idea that that's about the size of it. That's why Grandpa wasn't sure about whether the switch or a good talking-to would be better. What would be best of all, Grandpa felt sure, would be to make it clear to Max (a sensitive boy) that other people, not just crotchety old Marxists, felt the same way about his play. And while Grandpa was bumping along in the crosstown bus the morning after the performance, and meanwhile scanning the pages of the New York *Daily News* (a habit of his), what should catch his eye as the lead-off crack of Mr. Ed Sullivan's Broadway chatter column but this sentence: "'Nothing is made by men but makes, in the end, good ruins.' . . . That is the unbelievably shallow conclusion of Maxwell Anderson in *High Tor.*" Grandpa clipped the item out and said he was going to put it on the mantel in Max's room, where he can see it when he says his prayers at night.

M. Bernstein

I myself agree with both Grandpa and Mr. Sullivan. What makes me sore is that *High Tor* reveals an amazingly rich theatrical imagination and a feeling for the spoken word unexcelled by any playwright of our time. I don't mind the echoes of Thoreau, Shakespeare, Pirandello, Washington Irving, Santayana, and the rest; after all, knowledge is essentially socialistic in its nature, and in these matters what's one man's meat may well be another man's mutton. But when the final curtain line is the one Mr. Sullivan complained of, and is repeated a couple of times, with gross sententiousness, to make sure you don't escape its "profundity," and when another earlier end-act curtain line, offered with similar sententiousness, is "None of us knows where we leave off and ghosts begin; none of us knows where *ghosts* leave off and *we* begin," then it is impossible to burke the fact that the play's ideology is its chief feature. Now seriously, Mr. Anderson had better come to terms with his intelligence in such matters, or else get off the buggy. Here is a play which prolongs in high philosophic terms a conflict between a youth who loves his High Tor and means to fight all industrial capitalism to keep it; then, in the end, he airily yields the battle because maybe these days the view isn't so good after all. The merits of this issue are not the point; the point is that Mr. Anderson bellows, breathes flame, puts down his horns, and charges boldly up to a significant issue, and then ducks into the bushes. The same attitude characterized his treatment of the race-prejudice question in *The Wingless Victory,* where the husband argues that his Malay wife is as good as the New Englanders because she's really a Caucasian and she was a princess where she came from. Mr. Anderson had better snap out of it or else stop getting serious. If he doesn't, it won't be long before some of the other non-Marxist brethren will be suggesting that nothing is written by Mr. Anderson but makes, in the end, good ruins.

Space forbids more extended comment, but it must be said that Burgess Meredith is fine in the lead, and that many others in the company are first-rate. Jo Mielziner's settings are magical in the way they achieve their purpose.

The new *Othello* doesn't require much comment. Brian Aherne, as could be expected, does a vivid Iago, and Walter Huston's

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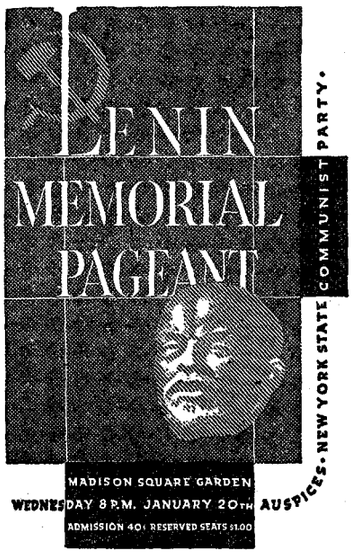

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Othello is sincere but uninspiring. The play hardly seems to deserve its fame; perhaps the most interesting thing about it is that Shakespeare should have written a play in which a black man is the heroic and tragic figure.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

THE SCREEN

GRETA GARBO and James Cagney are two actors who have been absent from the screen entirely too long. They both have in their individual way a dynamic personality and craftsmanship that even second-rate films and unimaginative direction cannot spoil. It is indeed a pleasure to watch them both work: Greta Garbo in *Camille* and Cagney in *Great Guy* (Grand National). In *Great Guy,* Cagney is a crusading inspector from the Bureau of Weights and Measures who goes around town exposing one racket after another and educating the housewife and other consumers. There are plenty of ward heelers and crooks, but no bloodshed. Mae Clark, who got a grapefruit in her face from Cagney in *Public Enemy,* supplies the love interest and Edward Brophy the comic relief. It is evident that the film is routine stuff, but Cagney is superb. At all times he is human and forceful. Many of the critics remarked that Cagney's reappearance on the screen indicated a reformation, because he is on the side of law and order. But even under the Warner regime he played the crusading truant officer in *Mayor of Hell.* Simply because *Public Enemy* was Cagney's most exciting film doesn't mean that there can't be an exciting Cagney in a film without violence and brutality. Certainly *Ceiling Zero* proved that. But that film had spine and guts. That's what *Great Guy* needed.

The only thing that saves *Camille* from being a complete washout is the presence of Greta Garbo. George Cukor, who presided over *Little Women* and *Romeo and Juliet,* has either been unable to cope with the story or with Garbo. This standard classic of the theater has been produced innumerable times on the stage and at least eight times in the films. Maybe it was the presence of Robert Taylor, or that the script was written by such a strange trio as James Hilton, Frances Marion, and Zoë Akins. But this current *Camille* is about the most detached and unsatisfactory version of the famous play I've ever seen with the exception of the Norma Talmadge version of 1927.

Director Cukor's realization of the play's climax, the scene centering on Duval's father (played here by Lionel Barrymore) is in the nature of an anti-climax. Instead of the hard-headed and conservative Frenchman, Barrymore walks around the room, following Garbo, pleading with her, begging her to give up his son. The question of the effect of Duval's relationship with Marguerite on his "respectable" family is avoided. The famous scene where Duval breaks Marguerite's heart by throwing his gambling winnings into her face is not as effective as it might have been. The outstanding scene in the film is where Garbo (Marguerite) insists on rising from her death-

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bed in order that she may dress and receive her lover properly. That one scene is brilliant and reveals Garbo's personality and remarkable technique. Some day, perhaps, Greta Garbo will get the kind of film she really deserves.

PETER ELLIS.

THE DANCE

SPAIN SAYS "SALUD!", the second of the Angna Enters compositions that came of her brief experience with the military uprising, is a stirring commentary on the heroism of the peasant women facing the fascist invasion.

A woman in mourning, evidently moving out from the ruins of some taken town, lays down a dead infant, rises from her weeping, removes the white handkerchief—"sign of the forced neutrality of the loyalist women"—wraps a red scarf around her arm, and clenches her fist in salute. *Salud!* This is the work briefly, stark lines for a reality that pantomimic sketch can scarcely hope to more than touch, a tremendous heroism that could expect to find little more than a suggestion of its meaning in the sparse notes of Miss Enters's composition.

The theater of Angna Enters is primarily a satiric theater, one that contemplates cynically the fables and the foibles of a corrupt and disintegrating bourgeoisie and its stauncher defenders. The excursion of the dance-mime into the more sympathetic fields where she would want to take a positive stand find her medium strained and her compositions consequently less successful.

Flesh-Possessed "Saint"—Spanish Monk, Red Malaga, 1936, commenting on the corrupt role of the church in the Spanish conflict, is an effective piece of social theater. *Spain Says "Salud!"*, however, is an attempt not at satire, but positive emotional reportage. Not without emotional appeal (and what can come from Spain that won't stir an audience?), the composition depends for its effect principally on the red scarf and the clenched fist—two devices the modern dancer has long discarded; and even in pantomime the red scarf and the fist are short cuts that need convinced development to give them meaning.

The dance-mime stems from the middle-class traditions no less than the modern dancer, and has similarly the dancer's problem of developing a form that will meet the demands of a developing mass audience. A mass audience will understand no more the decorative *Ikon—Byzantine* or the inconsequential *Pique-Nique (1850—Dejeuner au bois)* than it will some abstract concept in the modern idiom of the dance. Nor will it be moved by the easy and sentimental symbols from which *Spain Says "Salud!"* suffers. The strength of the composition dedicated by Angna Enters to the peasant women of Spain lies in its recognition of the intense suffering and the heroic struggle of the Spanish people. It is a case of a concept so stirring that, whatever the artistry of the composer, its presentation is enough to move an audience profoundly.

OWEN BURKE.

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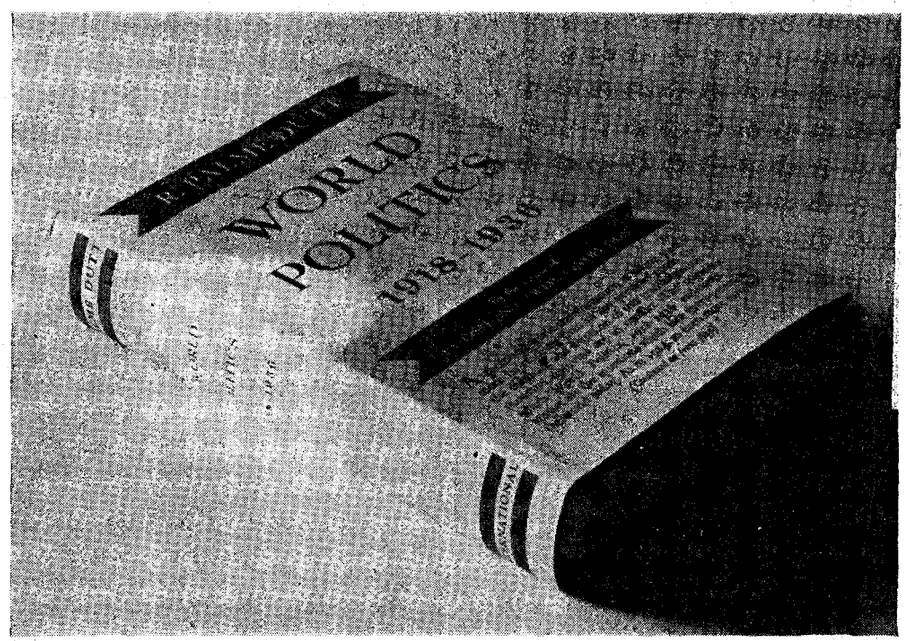

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